
THE DRAMATIC
WORKS
OF
SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

THE DRAMATIC

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SAMUEL FOOT, Esq.

November 15th - 1778 - Elizth Bryon - - -
THE DRAMATIC

W O R K S

O F

SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

C O N T A I N I N G

THE BANKRUPT.

THE LAME LOVER.

THE LYAR.

|| THE COMMISSARY.

|| THE COZENERS.

|| THE KNIGHTS.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED BY A. STUART,

FOR S. PRICE, B. CORCORAN, W. WHITESTONE,
J. WILLIAMS, W. COLLES, W. WILSON,
C. JENKIN, T. WALKER, L. FLIN,
P. HIGLY, L. WHITE I. BEATTY,
and J. EXSHAW.

M,DCC,DXXVIII.

W O R K S

SAMUEL JOHNSON, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES



CONTAINING

THE BARRISTERS.		THE COMMONS.
THE LAMBS LOVER.		THE GOVERNMENT.
THE LAY.		THE KNIGHTS.

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and J. FLEMING,
M.DCCCXXVIII.

THE
BANKRUPT.
A
COMEDY.

VOL. II.

B



TO THE MOST NOBLE

The Marquis of Granby,

THE PATRON OF LETTERS,

THE HOPE AND ORNAMENT

OF HIS COUNTRY,

THIS COMEDY

IS DEDICATED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S MOST

DEVOTED AND OBLIGED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

SAMUEL FOOTE.

TO THE MOST NOBLE

The Marquis of Granby

THE PATRON OF LETTERS

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THIS

IS

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S MOST

DEVOTED AND OBLIGED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

SAMUEL JOHNSON

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by MR. FOOTE.

FOR wit's keen satire, and this laughing stage,
 What theme so fruitful as a Bankrupt Age ?
 For not confin'd to commerce is the curse,
 The head is near as empty as the purse ;
 Equally sunk, our credit and our wit,
 Nor is the sage more solvent than the cit ;
 All these—but soft, ere thus abroad we roam,
 Were it not prudent first to look at home ?
 You, gentle Sirs, have giv'n me credit long,
 And took my word for many an idle song ;
 But if exhausted, I give notes to-day,—
 For wit and humour, which I cannot pay,
 I must turn Bankrupt too, and hop away.
 Unless indeed, I modishly apply,
 For leave to sell my works by lottery.
 Tho' few will favour, where's no cash to fee 'em,
 Poor hopes, that way to part with my Museum ;
 My old friend, Smirk, indeed, may lend his aid,
 And sell by auction all my stock in trade ;
 His placid features, and imploring eye,
 May tempt perhaps the tardy town to buy ;
 His winning manner, and his soft address,
 'To other sales of mine have given success ;
 But after all, my ever honour'd friends,
 On you alone my fate this night depends ;
 I've fought some battles, gain'd some vict'ries here,
 And little thought a culprit to appear
 Before this house ; but if resolv'd you go
 To find me guilty, or to make me so,
 To grant me neither wit, nor taste, nor sense,
 Vain were my plea, and useless my defence.
 But still, I will not steal, I will not beg,
 Tho' I've a passport in this wooden leg.

vi. P R O L O G U E.

But to my cot contentedly retire,
And stew my cabbage by my only fire;
Mean time, great Sirs, my sentence yet unknown,
Ev'n as your Justice be your candour shewn,
And when you touch my honour, don't forget your
own.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir Robert Riscounter,	—	Mr. Foote.
Sir James Biddulph,	—	Mr. Aichin.
Pillage,	—	Mr. Palmer.
Resource,	—	Mr. Fearon.
Margin,	—	Mr. Baddeley.
Robin,	—	Mr. Whitefield.
Phelim O'Flam,	—	Mr. Bannister.
James,	—	Mr. R. Palmer.
Sir Thomas Tradewell,	—	Mr. Davis.
Dingey,	—	Mr. Griffiths.
Pepper,	—	Mr. Stephens.
Plaister,	—	Mr. Jones.
Rumour,	—	Mr. Lloyd.
Clerk,	—	Mr. Walters.

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W O M E N.

Lady Riscounter,	—	Miss Sherry.
Lydia,	—	Mrs. Jewell.
Lucy,	—	Miss Ambrose.
Kitty,	—	Miss Platt.



T H E
B A N K R U P T.

A C T I.

Enter Robin and Kitty, meeting.

Robin.

THIS letter and casket, with my master's most respectful compliments, you will, Kitty, with your own fair hands, deliver to Miss.

Kitty. The casket is heavy—I suppose, Mr. Robin, this is what my Lady calls the Purryfunalia?

Robin. A small tribute, Madam, to adorn the bride on the happy occasion.

Kitty. What then, I suppose you look upon this marriage as good as concluded?

Robin. Things are gone such a length, that not the least doubt can be made.

Kitty. And yet between the cup and the lip,—you remember the proverb?

Robin. One of the parties may die to be sure, otherwise I don't know how—

Kitty. No?

Robin. No: The young lady has not alter'd her mind?

Kitty. Not to my knowledge.

Robin. What, Sir Robert Riscounter, her father? these curmudgeonly cits regard no ties, no obligations when they have an higher interest in view. I suppose

he has received larger proposals from some other party.

Kitty. I have heard no such thing.

Robin. Well then, I am sure no impediment can arise from our quarter. My master, Sir James Biddulph, is too much a man of honour: besides, I know his whole soul is wrapt up in Miss Lydia.

Kitty. He has given her pretty convincing proofs of his passion.

Robin. What, I suppose the malicious mother-in-law, who, I know, hates Miss, and has a damn'd deal of art, in conjunction with Miss Lucy, that precious pledge of her former husband's affections, has contrived to throw some confounded rub in the way.

Kitty. Bless me, Mr. Robin, I don't know what you mean, I am sure I said nothing at all.

Robin. No?

Kitty. No. But that things which are not done, may perhaps never be done; there is nothing certain but death.

Robin. Very moral, Miss Kitty,—(there is some mystery, if I could but get at it, but this slut is as cunning—I will have a trial, however) nay, for the matter of that, I can have, Mrs. Kitty, no interest at all in this match: there is so much confinement, and form, even in the most fashionable families, that a single service is best suited to me, especially too, that now I am got into most of the clubs: there is one circumstance I shall most feelingly regret: That I own, will greatly touch me.

Kitty. And pray, what may that be, Mr. Robin?

Robin. Not living under the same roof with Miss Kitty. I made no doubt, Madam, but your fortunes would follow your mistress's, and, in that case, I thought to soften the rigours of my captivity, in your agreeable converse.

Kitty. Really, Mr. Robin? Well, I protest, I did not.

Robin. And when our mutual endeavours had procur'd for us a small independence, I flatter'd myself with gently sliding the down-hill of life, subject to no other will but Miss Kitty's.

Kitty. What a difference between him, and the servants

vants of this side the bar?—Really, Mr. Robin, you talk nearly as well as your master.

Robin. And no wonder, Madam, since love, the same deity, inspires us both.

Kitty. How quick you are in your rippartees, Mr. Robin? are you good at a riddle?

Robin. If you mean the making them, no; it is too low a species of writing for me; for novels I have now and then some dealings with Noble, and have by me a genteel comedy of one act, that is thought to have a good deal of merit.

Kitty. And pray when does it make its appearance?

Robin. Why, faith, I don't know, all the managers are such scribblers, that they do not give a genius fair play, but engross the whole stage to themselves.

Kitty. Very selfish, indeed. Well, Mr. Robin, tho' you won't make a riddle, I will, which, as my Lady expects me, you may study to expound by yourself. This match won't take place, and yet are none of the parties to blame; I may live in the same house with you, though I should leave my young Mistress's service, and the loss of my place may perhaps be the making of my fortune. So Adieu.

Robin. Nay, but Miss Kitty, one word, if you please.

Kitty. Not a syllable, go, and puzzle your brains. But take this, for your comfort, that if you cannot at present make out my meaning, a little time will fully explain it. [Exit.]

Robin. So skittish and shy, Mrs. Pert! but if our next meeting don't bring forth this secret, you are no true chambermaid, nor I fit for a valet de chambre. All reserve amongst servants is flat treason against the community. Every well-disciplin'd domestic is bound in honour, however careful of his own, to reveal all family secrets, to the rest of the tribe. But I must brush off, for here comes my Lady. [Exit.]

Enter Lady Riscounter, and James.

Lady Ris. And he has promised that the paragraph shall appear in the paper this morning?

James. I am afraid, Madam, there is no doubt of his keeping his word.

Lady Rif. Afraid! what a pusillanimous creature art thou?

James. As your Ladyship, by what means I know not, is acquainted with my veneration for Miss, you can't wonder at my feeling some compunction, in becoming an instrument to ruin her fame.

Lady Rif. Why the fellow is a fool: don't you consider, that her ruin, as you call it, will be your rise?

James. Perhaps so, Madam, but how can I—

Lady Rif. You love Lydia, you say?

James. More than I have words to express.

Lady Rif. And Sir James Biddulph you detest, as a successful rival, no doubt?

James. Except on that account, I have no reason.

Lady Rif. And what better reason can any man have? don't you know, that the two great master passions that give birth to all that we do, is hatred and love?

James. Without doubt.

Lady Rif. The mind would stagnate without them; and are you not particularly fortunate, in being able, by one masterly stroke, to gratify both?

James. Were I indeed sure of succeeding with Miss?

Lady Rif. You have every probable chance in your favour: in the first place, it is impossible, consistently with your honour, that Sir James Biddulph can pursue his designs upon Lydia.

James. May be not.

Lady Rif. Nor will any proper suitable person think of her when her reputation is gone.

James. Too true, I believe.

Lady Rif. Then, who so likely to succeed as yourself? as you are the party suspected, common policy will point out you for her husband.

James. But will Miss Lydia be brought to submit?

Lady Rif. She can have no choice but her father's. Him, I can easily manage, and possibly, as a douceur, prevail on him to augment the very considerable fortune she derives from her aunt; never fear, things are in a very good way.

James.

James. I must submit to your ladyship's management.

Lady Rif. Your part will be easy enough, you will have nothing to do but be passive.

Enter Kitty, and Lucy, with a news-paper in her hand.

Lucy. Here, Madam, here it is, and placed in a most conspicuous part of the paper.

Lady Rif. And no alteration?

Lucy. Not a word. In the exact form that we sent it.

Lady Rif. Pr'ythee read it, my dear.

Lucy. [*Reads*] "We can assure the public, from the very best authority, that the beautiful daughter, by a former venter, of an eminent banker, not far from the Monument, was surpris'd by the servants, in a most critical situation, with Mr. J——s, clerk to her father."

Lady Rif. Right, right.

Lucy. "And what heightens her crime, she was on the eve of being married to an amiable young baronet, at the west end of the town, the apparent object of her own choice."

Lady Rif. Finely circumstantial, it is impossible for any body to err in the person.

Lucy. Not in nature; now, I think, we shall pull down Miss Prudery's pride.

Lady Rif. It cannot fail. Kitty, you have carefully perused the instructions I gave you.

Kitty. Please your ladyship, I have them by heart.

Lady Rif. Don't be too forward in replying to any question they put to you; but answer with a kind of reluctant hesitation, as if the facts were forced from your mouth.

Kitty. Never fear, Madam.

Lady Rif. Don't forget to make frequent professions of the great love and affection you bear your young mistress, that you could not have thought it, shan't know whom to trust for the future; ready to lay down your life for your lady.

Lucy.

Lucy. Suggest too, that some strange arts must have been used, or you are convinc'd she could never have been brought to submit.

Kitty. I shall carefully, Madam, obey your directions.

Lady Rif. And squeeze out a tear now and then, if you can.

Lucy. Or, if they won't come, rub your eyes till they are red.

Lady Rif. Right; this will give probability to all you say.

Lucy. Otherwise, the young hypocrite's behaviour has been always so specious, those who know her won't credit the story.

Kitty. Suppose, Madam, Sir James Biddulph, or any body else, should make any enquiry.

Lady Rif. Answer none of their questions; your tenderness for Lydia will be a proper excuse; to your master's authority, indeed, you are obliged to submit. You comprehend me?

Kitty. Perfectly, Madam.

Lady Rif. Within, I will give you further instructions; and remember, Kitty, your fortune is at stake: Success, in this one instance, will make you easy for life.

Kitty. The best I can do will be but a poor return for your ladyship's goodness.

Lady Rif. Send the news-paper in to your master. [Exit Kitty.] You have, James, seen none of our people this morning?

James. I have not enter'd the shop.

Lady Rif. Then get out of the way as fast as you can; secrete yourself somewhere, that will give additional strength to the story. Your withdrawing will argue a consciousness arising from guilt.

James. That I most sufficiently feel.

Lady Rif. Success will soon drown the remembrance. [Exit James.] That fellow must not appear; his mind is so maudish, that should he be confronted with Lydia, he would betray our whole plot in an instant.

Lucy. It is a wonder, Madam, how you have got all this

this address: instead of a private family, you are form'd to govern a country.

Lady Rif. Why, I think, I may without vanity say, that I deriv'd from nature some talents for this kind of intrigue; but to the care of my education I chiefly owe what I am.

Lucy. Indeed, Madam!

Lady Rif. My father was a stock-broker, you know, and your father, my first husband, an attorney, my dear.

Lucy. True, Madam.

Lady Rif. And as they had no reserve, they kept no secrets from me, I must have been a blockhead, indeed, not to have made some progress in their professional arts.

Lucy. True, Madam.

Eady Rif. But after defeating Sir James Biddulph's designs upon Lydia, to turn the tide of his affections, and substitute you in her room, will, Lucy, be the great political effort.

Lucy. From your ladyship's great abilities there cannot be the least doubt of success: besides, her father is so hasty and violent that, I am sure, he will never be brought to forgive her.

Lady Rif. There is no relying on that; no mortal was ever so mutable. Our various climate is not so inconstant as he. Sir Robert is choleric enough, but then, as he is provoked without a cause, he is appeased without reason; one word will inflame, another extinguish the fire; whom one minute he persecutes, the next he protects. His joy, grief, love, hatred, are in eternal rotation, and I have been often tempted to think his mind a machine, moved only by the immediate objects before it.

Lucy. And yet, Madam, how compleatly you rule him!

Lady Rif. No longer, child, than I stay by his side; after that, the first person has him that sees him, and all my impressions are effac'd in an instant.

Enter

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. My master has got at the paragraph.

Lady Rif. Has he so? well, and—

Kitty. He enquired, Madam, for you, and putting his finger here, bid me shew this directly to your ladyship.

Lady Rif. He did not suspect then that I had seen it before?

Kitty. Not in the least—but here he comes, tottering and trembling—with his face as white as a sheet.

Lady Rif. Get you behind.

Enter Sir Robert Riscounter.

Sir Rob. Well, my dear, have you read—

Lady Rif. Sir Robert, I have.

Sir Rob. Have you so? Well, and pray what do you think? Did you ever see such an audacious, abominable, impudent, scandalous piece of scurrility? Zounds, give me my cane, I will go to the rascally printer's, and—

Lady Rif. But suppose, Sir Robert, the printer should not be passive, and in return for the strokes of your cane, should leave the marks of his nails in your face?

Sir Rob. There may be something in that, as your ladyship says. I have heard some of the rogues are strong and sturdy enough.

Lady Rif. And, first, let us be sure who the party is the paragraph points at.

Sir Rob. Hey! what d'ye say? points at? why, it is as clear as the sun—*[takes the paper]*—banker—Monument—first venter—zounds, they might as well have published my name, and my daughter's, at length.

Lady Rif. Why, to say truth, the marks are pretty strong; but still let us coolly consider the case. Kitty, go down; Lucy, my dear, leave Sir Robert and me together a little.

[Exit Lucy and Kitty.]

Sir Rob. Ay, go, child, pr'ythee go. I don't believe, Lady Riscounter, that there is a single man in the

the Ward, who would have the least hesitation in pronouncing who was—

Lady Rif. Well, but don't let us be in such hurry to make the application ourselves; the malice of others will be ready enough to do that: let me see, is there no other banker lives near the Monument?

Sir Rob. Not that I know; but suppose there should, here, the west end of the town, and the amiable baronet, puts the matter out of dispute; hey, what d'ye say?—

Lady Rif. That, indeed; but, hold a little, does not it mention the name of the paramour? Ay, here it is, J—S.

Sir Rob. J—s.

Lady Rif. J—s, I don't recollect any body that visits here, whose name those letters will suit.

Sir Rob. There is no Jones, nor Joddrell—poo, pox, that is an L—nor Jennings, nor Jarvis, nor Jenkins, nor—

Lady Rif. Not that I recollect.

Sir Rob. There is Jacobs the Jew, but he is as old as one of the Patriarchs, with his beard down to his breeches; they can never mean him.

Lady Rif. Poo! that is too absurd to suppose: but stay, are there no other distinguishing marks? um, um——“J—s, clerk of her father's,” I own that passage escaped me.

Sir Rob. Hey! what did you say? and me too, one of my clerks! who can that be? J—s, the two letters belonging to a surname.

Lady Rif. So I should imagine.

Sir Rob. Zounds! it can never be James.

Lady Rif. James!

Sir Rob. An impudent, eternal, damn'd son of a bitch! this is the consequence of taking beggars into your bosom.

Lady Rif. But, Sir Robert——

Sir Rob. Don't mention it, Madam; was not he the thirteenth son of a starv'd curate in Essex, ragged as their colts, and knew as much as one of their calves—did not I feed, cloath, take him into my house, treat him

him as if he had been—and, in return, the villain to dishonour my child!

Lady Ris. You are too impatient, Sir Robert; why should you fix all at once upon James? I have observed the lad's behaviour to be discreet and modest; nay, indeed, rather shy and reserv'd.

Sir Rob. That is true enough, I must own. I never remark'd the boy to be presumptuous and forward, like some of our pert prigs of the city, but, as your ladyship observes, rather bashful and shy. No, no, it can never be him.

Lady Ris. Nay, but my dear, let us conclude nothing rashly. Suppose you send for James up, and sift him a little?

Sir Rob. That mayn't be amiss—who's there?

Lady Ris. Not that I believe he will be ever brought to confess.

Sir Rob. He! no, no, curse him. Him! you will never catch him at that: you might as well hope to extract sugar from salt. I may as well let him alone.

Lady Ris. Let us see him however.

Enter a Servant.

Sir Rob. True, let James know that I want him, but don't tell the fellow that I am angry, and so get him to skulk out of the way.

Serv. I did not know your worship was angry, 'till you told me your—

Sir Rob. I tell you! my dear, did I say any such thing? you prying, impertinent——Go, and do as you are bid. *[Exit Servant.]*

Lady Ris. I don't think it unlikely, Sir Robert, but some idle acquaintance, without considering the consequences, may have inserted this malicious article, by way of pleasantry, as a kind of jest upon James.

Sir Rob. Nothing so probable, Lady Riscounter: this town swarms with such forward, frivolous puppies.

Enter

Enter Servant.

Well, where is James?

Serv. Sir, he is not within.

Sir Rob. What, is the rascal run off?

Lady Ris. No, my dear, perhaps only gone out with some bills for acceptance.

Sir Rob. Like enough. When will he be back?

Serv. The rest of the clerks have not seen him to-day.

Sir Rob. Not seen him to-day? what are all of them blind then?

Lady Ris. Nay, Sir Robert, perhaps he has not been in the shop.

Serv. So they say.

[*Exit.*

Sir Rob. Then they could not see him, indeed. Not in the shop! nay, then the business is clear; guilt, guilt, flight is full as bad as confession.

Lady Ris. It does look suspicious, I own; but then nothing ill can happen without your daughter's concurrence, and you have not the least doubt of her.

Sir Rob. Doubt! hey!

Lady Ris. And, in fact, have nothing to fear.

Sir Rob. Fear! doubt! I hope your ladyship has no more doubts than myself.

Lady Ris. Why should I? how does this affair concern me?

Sir Rob. As it concerns me, Lady Riscounter; do you suppose I should have been indifferent, if such a charge had fallen on Lucy?

Lady Ris. Such a charge can never fall upon my daughter Lucy.

Sir Rob. Full as soon as on my daughter Lydia.

Lady Ris. I am not, Sir Robert, so certain of that.

Sir Rob. Lady Riscounter, you begin to alarm me; you know more of this matter, than you are willing to own.

Lady Ris. Whatever I know, Sir Robert, I am resolved not to communicate.

Sir Rob. And why not?

Lady Ris. Whatever a mother-in-law says, the good-natured world imputes to malice.

Sir

Sir Rob. Generally the case, I must own. But to me you may, nay, you ought to reveal.

Lady Rif. Since you are so earnest, I own some rumours have reach'd me.

Sir Rob. Of what kind?

Lady Rif. You will pardon me there: if you will examine your daughter's maid, Kitty; she, I am told, can satisfy all your enquiries.

Sir Rob. An artful baggage, I know. For heaven's sake, my dear, send her hither directly.

Lady Rif. But not the least mention of me. [Exit.

Sir Rob. Very well. I never observ'd the least correspondence between Lydia and James; but what of that? they would take good care, I warrant, to conceal it from me.

Enter Kitty.

So, I find you were the go-between, the little infamous agent in this curs'd——

Kitty. Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. You must have been a volunteer; I am sure, James was not able to bribe you, for he is as poor as a pillag'd black in Bengal.

Kitty. Really, Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir Rob. You mean, hussy, you won't: Come, you may as well tell me all the particulars concerning Lydia and James; with the main article, you see I am already acquainted.

Kitty. Don't press me, pray Sir; I would rather die than say any thing to hurt my young mistress. [cries.

Sir Rob. Nay, pr'ythee, Kitty, don't cry, you are a good girl, and love my daughter, I see.

Kitty. And not without reason, for she has been the kindest, best——

Sir Rob. Nay, till now, she was ever an amiable girl; but here, child, you will do her a capital service.

Kitty. Indeed, Sir——

Sir Rob. For if her affections are fix'd upon James, tho' I may lament, I shall not oppose him.

Kitty. Since that is the case, I can't say, but early
one

one morning, hearing a noise in Miss Lydia's apartment, I stepp'd down to see what was the matter.

Sir Rob. Well?

Kitty. Just as I got to the foot of the stairs, her door open'd, and out came Mr. James.

Sir Rob. Did he; and why did not you alarm the house and seize the villain directly?

Kitty. That, Sir, would have ruined my Lady's reputation at once.

Sir Rob. True enough, you did wisely. Did the fellow perceive you?

Kitty. Yes, Sir, and made me a sign to be silent.

Sir Rob. I don't doubt it.

Kitty. Indeed, he came to me two hours after, told me he had a passion for Miss, never could get an opportunity of disclosing his mind, and desperate, at finding his hopes on the point of being ruin'd, he had stolen that morning into her chamber, humbly to implore her compassion and pity.

Sir Rob. He chose a fine time and place for the purpose.

Kitty. On his knees he desired, I would not disclose to any mortal what I had seen.

Sir Rob. Which you should not have done.

Kitty. He was too late in his caution; not five minutes before I had told it to Mrs. Hemshot, Miss Lucy's maid.

Sir Rob. No wonder then the story is public.

Kitty. I am certain sure, my young mistress is innocent, for Mr. James vowed and declar'd he was all upon honour.

Sir Rob. The malice of mankind will never be brought to believe it; you may go. [*Exit Kitty.*] So the girl's reputation is gone, and a retreat from the world the only choice that is left her: all my calamities are come upon me at once; my child ruin'd, and from the general distress, my own fame and fortune on the brink of destruction: the attorney and broker will be instantly here to contrive means for propping my tottering credit. Am I in a condition to think of expedients, or to listen to—

Enter

Enter Servant.

Serv. A card, Sir.

Sir Rob. Reads.] "Sir James Biddulph's compliments
"to Sir Robert Riscouter, and if convenient will take
"the liberty to wait on him this morning." Prepar'd,
as I expected, our misfortunes have reach'd him, and
he comes to break off the match; he is not to be blam'd.
This rash, inconsiderate—I'll to her, and if she has the
least atom of feeling, I'll—And yet, how could the poor
girl help his intrusion? she might be ignorant, and yet
the fellow without encouragement, would never have
dared to—Yet the impudence of some men is amazing,
and so indeed is the folly of women: the original fault
must be his. But her after-compliance makes her equal-
ly guilty, for had she disapproved, she would have re-
veal'd the fact to her mother or me. That, that, con-
demns her at once; I will to her directly, and find out
the full extent of her guilt.

[Exit.]

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

*Miss Lucy and Miss Lydia discovered.**Lucy.*

TO us, indeed, who are incumber'd with fathers and mothers, marriage is a convenient business enough.

Lydia. And why on that account, my dear Lucy?

Lucy. As it makes one the entire mistress of one's time, and one is accountable to no mortal for what one says or does.

Lydia. What Lucy, not to your husband?

Lucy. Nay, don't be prudish my dear: you are going back to the days of Queen Bess; who talks now of obedience and duty? ridiculous! her majesty's old far-dingale is not more out of fashion.

Lydia. No!

Lucy. No: one reads in books, indeed, of nuptial ties and conjugal love; mere obsolete stuff! modern marriages are mere matters of interest.

Lydia. Interest!

Lucy. Ay, child; for instance now, Sir Thomas Perkins, our neighbour, finding that Miss Williams has a good parcel of land, which being contiguous to his estate, will be very proper for him to possess; immediately sends his rent-roll a-courting to her's. The parchments are produced on both sides, and no impediments, that is incumbrance appearing, a couple of lawyers marry the manors together.

Lydia. Without the least regard to the persons.

Lucy. Poo, persons! they are consider'd, child, as mansion-houses upon the estates, which one lives in, or neglects, just as they happen to be convenient, or not.

Lydia. But suppose, Lucy, as in mine, there should happen to be no land in the case?

Lucy. Then, child, the bargain is alter'd: you deposit

posit so much money, and he grants you such an annuity ; a mere Smithfield bargain, that is all.

Lydia. A pretty picture you give me of marriage. But this is all raillery, Lucy ; I am sure you would never submit to this barter and sale.

Lucy. I should do like the rest of the world. We must take things as we find them. You are not so foolish as to be fond of Sir James Biddulph, my dear.

Lydia. Fond ? the expression is strong ; you must imagine I prefer him to the rest of——

Lucy. Why, as to his appearance, it must be own'd, that the mansion is a pretty modern structure enough, well built, and prettily finish'd : I can't indeed say his upper story is furnished quite to my taste.

Lydia. Nay, Lucy, now you are unjust, the whole world concur in giving him sense.

Lucy. Nay, that article is not yet material. If I had him, that is a part of his house, with which I should hold very little communication, my dear. But however, you love him.

Lydia. Or I am sure I never would have him.

Lucy. And, I suppose, if any accident was to break off this match, it would make you very unhappy.

Lydia. Can you doubt it, my dear ?

Lucy. There is one evil that attends these ridiculous contracts.

Lydia. You don't look upon love then as an essential ingredient ?

Lucy. Ha ! ha ! ha ! silly and singular ; do you know, Lydia, why Love is always painted as blind ?

Lydia. There are many causes assigned by the poets.

Lucy. But not one has given the true one : because the little rogue shuts our eyes to our interests.

Lydia. Fye, Lucy, where could you get these narrow and libertine notions ?

Lucy. A little more experience will tell you. But here comes Sir Robert, not a word of what has pass'd.

Lydia. I shall, my dear Lucy, for your sake, endeavour to forget all you have said.

Enter

Enter Sir Robert Riscouter.

Sir Rob. Lucy, you may go down. [*Exit Lucy*] After what has pass'd, you will not be surpriz'd that I insist upon your immediately quitting my house!

Lydia. Quitting the house, Sir!

Sir Rob. Your fortune is independent and large; you will no doubt be happy in escaping from the observing eye of a father.—I will be cool, and desire only an answer to a very few questions. Since the death of your mother (who is happy in having escap'd the knowledge of this infamous business) have I been ever wanting in any act of paternal affection?

Lydia. For Heaven's sake, Sir, what can be the meaning of——

Sir Rob. Come, no evasions, but answer briskly, yes, or no, to the questions.

Lydia. No, Sir.

Sir Rob. After my first care to educate you fit for the world, has it not been my principal study to settle you properly in it?

Lydia. Most assuredly, Sir.

Sir Rob. And knowing to what temptations girls at your age are expos'd, did I not seek out a man of rank, honour, and fortune, to be your protector, and guardian for life?

Lydia. I confess it.

Sir Rob. Did you ever express the least dislike to Sir James Biddulph's address?

Lydia. Never.

Sir Rob. How could you then so far forget what you owe me, and yourself, as privately to harbour and encourage a passion——

Lydia. I am confounded.

Sir Rob. For an object too unsuitable in every respect for a mere creature of charity.

Lydia. Charity!

Sir Rob. Ay, for it was compassion to the father's numerous family that induced me to take James into my house.

Lydia.

Lydia. James! what of him? or what relation, Sir, can he have to me?

Sir Rob. This is astonishing in a girl of her years.—What then, you know nothing of this fellow's affections?

Lydia. For me?

Sir Rob. Ay, for you. No billet-doux, no private meetings, no stealing into your chamber before the servants were out of their beds.

Lydia. Amazing! and who, Sir, has dared to insinuate—

Sir Rob. Insinuate! why the tale is the talk of the town: all the morning papers are full on't.

Lydia. What can, Sir, be the meaning of this? is it possible you think, Sir, your daughter so abandoned, so lost—

Sir Rob. Hey!

Lydia. Recollect, dear Sir, I beseech you, have I in the whole course of my life, ever once dared to deceive you?

Sir Rob. Why, Child, I can't say that you have. But in this case, there is such positive proof.

Lydia. Of what kind, I beseech you?

Sir Rob. Facts, facts, well attested; so don't pretend to deny.

Lydia. Attested! by whom?

Sir Rob. Their names are needless at present. But what motive or interest could any one have to invent, or propagate?

Lydia. None, that I can discover; but, however strong the appearance, if either in thought, word, or deed, there has any thing, either criminal or culpable, passed between me and—

Sir Rob. What, no declarations? no interviews?

Lydia. No more than with any other man in your service.

Sir Rob. Astonishing!

Lydia. If the contrary can be made to appear, abandon me, Sir, at once to that world, already so prepossessed to my prejudice, the greatest misfortune that can ever befall me.

Sir Rob.

Sir Rob. Well, child, rise ; I can't help giving credit to what you aver. But how to persuade the rest of—

Enter A Servant.

Somebody wants me ? as I expected. Sir James Bidulph I reckon.

Servant. No, Sir, a couple of gentlemen, who say they came by appointment.

Sir Rob. I guess who they are. Another bad business. Shew them into the parlour. [*Exit Servant.*] You don't know half your father's afflictions—go, child, go into your chamber.

Lydia. I hope my father believes me.

Sir Rob. I do, I do. As soon as I have dispatch'd these gentlemen, I will see you again. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, A Parlour.

Enter Pillage and Resource.

Pill. Ay, take my word for it, Mr. Resource, in the whole round of the law, and, thank Heaven, the dominions are pretty extensive, there is not a nicer road to hit than the region of Bankrupts.

Reso. I should have thought it a turnpike, for you see how easily even a country Attorney can find it.

Pill. Pihaw, what amongst manufacturers, and meagre mechanics ? fellows not worth powder and Shot ; and yet these paltry Provincials, master Resource, are often obliged to solicit my aid.

Reso. Indeed !

Pill. Why, t'other day, a poor dog, over head and ears, in debt from the country, was recommended to me, by a client : the fellow had scrap'd together all he could get, and came up to town, with a view of running beyond sea, but I stopp'd him directly.

Reso. Really !

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C

Pill.

Pill. O, ay, in a couple of months wash'd him as white as a sheep that is just shorn.

Refs. How did you bring it about ?

Pill. Easy enough. Made him take a house in Cheap-side, call'd him a citizen, in the London Gazette, and his name of John Madge, (being as common as carrots) not a soul in the county suspected that it was he.

Refs. How should they ?

Pill. Pass'd a few necessary notes to get him number and value, white-wash'd him, and sent him home to his wife.

Refs. Cleanly and cleverly done.

Pill. When the country chaps brought in their bills, he drew out of his pocket a certificate, and gave them a receipt in full for all their demands.

Refs. How the loobies must look,

Pill. Chap-fallen, no doubt : but he is in business again.

Refs. He is ?

Pill. O yes, and I hear does very well. For I left him two hundred out of the six he brought with him, to begin the world with credit afresh.

Refs. Very generous indeed, Mr. Pillage.

Pill. O ! a trifling affair, got little by it !—for the matter of that, a mere statute is not much in itself.

Refs. Ay ! Well I thought it brought pretty perquisites with it.

Pill. No, no ; it is a good hot-bed indeed to raise chancery suits in.

Refs. Ay, that is a produce that deserves, propagation.

Pill. What, I see you have found a remedy for master Monk of the Minorities ? I thought his was an incurable case.

Refs. Only skinn'd o'er the fore, master Pillage, it will soon break out again.

Pill. What were the means that you used ?

Refs. Got some friends of mine to advance him cash on a project.

Pill. Of what kind ?

Refs. A scheme of his, to monopolize sprats and potatoes.

Pill.

Pill. And it took ?

Refs. Oh ! there was no danger of that. The people of this country are always ready to bite at a bubble.

Pill. Will it hold ?

Refs. Plhaw ! We shall break before the season for sprats, and as to the Potatoes, we had laid in a ship load or two.

Pill. For which you procured a good price ?

Refs. Not a soufe. They are all now in our cellars in Southwark, and have shot out branches as tall as the trees in the Park.

Pill. Ha ! ha ! ha ! but apropos, can you guess Sir Robert's business with us ?

Refs. Very near. I believe.

Pill. What, the house is not a tumbling ?

Refs. A pretty large crack.

Pill. Which he wants our assistance to plaister. Why, I thought the knight was as firm as a rock.

Refs. I knew better things. I saw the mansion was daily decaying. Hu!h, here he comes.

Enter Sir Robert, followed by his Clerk.

Sir Rob. As we have effects in our hands, accept the bills to be sure. But how to discharge them when they are due.—So, gentlemen, I have sent for you to beg your assistance.

Pill. Sir Robert, we shall be very happy to serve you, if you will tell us but how.

Sir Rob. Why, to deal plainly, gentlemen, my affairs are come to a crisis, and without some substantial and speedy assistance, my credit will quickly expire.

Pill. You surprize me: I never guess'd it in danger. Pray, Sir Robert, what brought on the disease, was it an alley fever, or a gradual decay.

Sir Rob. A complication of causes. Not but I could have weather'd them all, had the house in Holland but stood, their failure must be followed by mine.

Pill. What, Van Swieten's ?

Sir Rob. Have you heard any thing of him to-day ?

Pill. No doubt, I believe, of their stopping; their bills were offer'd at Garraway's under forty per cent. As your name is not blown upon yet, suppose you coin a couple of quires! don't you think the circulation might serve you?

Sir Rob. No that mint is exhausted, and private paper return'd to its primitive value. My real case can be no longer conceal'd. I must stop, and should be glad of your advice how to manage the matter.

Pill. There are two methods in use. The choice will depend on how affairs stand with the world.

Sir Rob. Bitter bad, Mr. Pillage.

Pill. I guess'd as much, by your sending for us. They treat us, Master Resource, like a couple of quacks, never apply but in desperate cases.

Ref. But in all diseases there are different degrees.

Pill. True; for instance, if you find you are pretty near on a par, with perhaps a small balance per contra, summon your creditors, lay your conditions fully before them, convince them you have a fund to answer all their demands, and crave a respite for three or four years.

Sir Rob. Just to call in my debts, and make the most of my other effects?

Ref. True; as the English merchants have a good deal of milk in their blood, that is a favour rarely refused.

Sir Rob. This, Master Pillage, will be only deferring the evil.

Pill. That is, Sir Robert, as you manage the cards. Don't you see that the length of time, with the want or wish of ready money for trade, will dispose the bulk of your creditors to sell their debts at a loss of thirty or forty per cent.

Sir Rob. True.

Ref. No contemptible sum, when a man's dealings are large.

Sir Rob. But how shall I profit by—

Pill. What hinders you from privately buying the debts?

Sir Rob. That, indeed—

Ref.

Ref. A fine fortune sav'd out of the fire.

Pill. True. And now we talk of the fire, for a present supply, you may burn a warehouse or two, after it has been gutted of all its contents

Ref. And recover the full amount of the policy.

Pill. Did you never try that?

Ref. No, I don't think he has done any thing in the fire way yet; have you, Sir Robert?

Sir Rob. Never once came into my head.

Pill. May be not; oh! for a fertile brain, there are many means to be used; but what d'ye say to my plan?

Sir Rob. What, the summoning scheme? I am so involved, that I am afraid that project will never prevail.

Pill. Then you have nothing left but a statute.

Sir Rob. But if my certificate should not be granted?

Pill. That is my proper business, Sir Robert. If we find your creditors inclined to be crusty, there will be no difficulty in creating demands to get number and value.

Sir Rob. That will swell my debts to a monstrous amount.

Ref. So much the more for your honour; consider you are a knight, and your dignity demands you should fail for a capital sum.

Sir Rob. Does it?

Pill. To be sure. Why, you would not sneak into the Gazette like a Birmingham button-maker.

Ref. Oh fie!

Pill. He would never after be able to shew his head upon Change.

Ref. Never, never.

Pill. And then, you know, what with the portable stuff, such as jewels, or cash, that he himself may secrete, and the dividends that fall to the share of his friends, which they will doubtless restore—

Ref. He will be fit to begin the world again with *clat*.

Pill. In a much better condition than ever.

Ref. And his children's children will have reason to thank him.

Sir Rob. But is there not some danger in concealing the portable stuff, as you call it?

Pill.

Pill. Not in the least. Besides, to colour the business, you may collect a purse of light guineas, with an old batter'd family watch, and deliver them to the commissioners on your first examination.

Reso. That will give an air of integrity.

Sir Rob. You seem to think, then, Gentlemen, that it is the duty of every honest merchant to break once at least in his life, for the good of his family?

Reso. Not the least question of that.

Pill. Every day's practice confirms it. Well, Sir Robert, when shall I provide you the tackle?

Sir Rob. The tackle!

Pill. In about a month or six weeks, I think, you may be made fit to appear in the papers.

Sir Rob. In the Gazette, as a bankrupt?

Reso. Aye, but then no time must be lost.

Pill. Not a moment, for should they smoke his design—

Sir Rob. Gentlemen, I must decline your assistance.

Pill. How?

Sir Rob. For, without considering the private injury I may do to particular persons, this mischievous method must soon affect the whole mercantile world.

Pill. Why, what has that—

Sir Rob. Mutual confidence is the very cement of commerce. That weaken'd, the whole structure must fall to the ground.

Reso. Hey!

Sir Rob. From the practice of these infamous arts, as it is impossible they can be conceal'd, what suspicions, what jealousies must every man in trade entertain?

Pill. How!

Sir Rob. What an injury besides, to those in my unhappy condition? the risks and losses unavoidably connected with commerce, procure the unsuccessful trader, generally the compassion, sometimes the friendly aid, of those of his order.

Reso. We know that well enough.

Sir Rob. But when bankruptcy becomes a lucrative traffic, and men are found to fail with a view of making their fortunes, the unhappy and fraudulent will be confounded

founded together, and punishment fall on his head, who has a title to pity.

Pill. The man's mad.

Sir Rob. Perhaps I myself am a sacrifice to those very arts you have recommended so warmly. But there the mischief shall end. Men may suffer from my calamities, but they never shall by my crimes. *[Exit.]*

Pill. Did you ever meet with such a squeamish old fool? what could he mean by sending for us?

Ref. Who can tell? his head's turn'd, I suppose.

Pill. I thought we had him sure; but how nimbly has he slipp'd through our fingers!

Ref. Necessity will soon bring him back to our hook. He is shy for the present, but I warrant he will bite bye and bye.

Pill. Or we shall lose a capital prize.

Ref. Indeed, should his friends interpose, and matters be compounded without us.

Pill. That I have a sure way to prevent. Before an hour is past, I will tear such a rent in his robe, as I defy all the botchers in Europe to mend.

Ref. By what means?

Pill. I know he is in the receipt of some government money; I will take care to saddle him with an extent.

Ref. That will do.

Pill. I shall only go and take out a commission against five macaronies, who are joint annuitants to a couple of Jews.

Ref. But how can you lug them into a statute? they are no dealers, you know.

Pill. No, dealers? yes, but they are.

Ref. Aye, of what kind?

Pill. Why, why they are dealers of cards *[Exeunt.]*

Enter Lady Riscounter, and Sir James Biddulph.

Lady Ris. If you will walk in, Sir James, Sir Robert is a little busy at present, but he will wait upon you directly.

Sir James. I have no call, Madam, that prevents my attending his leisure.

Lady Rif. I fear the design of this visit, Sir James, is of a different nature from those we have lately receiv'd.

Sir James. I came, Madam, to offer my aid in detecting and punishing an infamous calumny that has made its way to the public, this morning.

Lady Rif. But reports of this kind, when despised and neglected, gradually die of themselves. It is a most unlucky affair, I confess.

Sir James. Unlucky! most false and atrocious: I hope, Madam, we shall be able to discover its author.

Lady Rif. As to that, it is scarce worth the enquiry.

Sir James. How, Madam!

Lady Rif. We have family reasons, Sir James, for wishing to draw a veil over—

Sir James. A veil! I am astonish'd, Lady Riscounter!

Lady Rif. The loss of your alliance; indeed, which now we dare neither expect, nor desire, has mortified us all not a little. If any other means could be found to form a connection between us, and a person of your merit and rank, there is nothing, I am sure, I should so ardently wish.

Sir James. Your ladyship is most exceedingly kind.

Lady Rif. I hope the whole family, especially myself and daughter, are not, through the error of one, to be punished with the loss of your friendship.

Sir James. You do me infinite honour.

Lady Rif. Indeed, my Lucy, upon this occasion, felt chiefly for you; for tho' perhaps not so imposing and specious, as the girl whose lapse we lament, she has great goodness of heart, and a proper sense of your worth.

Sir James. Miss Lucy is most prodigiously—

Lady Rif. But Sir Robert's door opens, and as my presence may not be so proper upon this occasion, I take my leave, with the hopes of soon receiving a visit.

Sir James. I shall be happy, Madam, in seizing every occasion—your ladyship's—[*Exit Lady Riscounter.*] What can be the meaning of this? She seems to confirm and credit the infamous story. Sir Robert, I suppose, will explain it.

Enter

Enter Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. Sir James, I scarce know how to accost you ; but the confusion I feel at the unhappy cause of your visit.

Sir James. Indeed, Sir Robert, I own myself greatly perplex'd. I enter'd your house, full of the warmest resentment, and prepar'd to take every active part in my power ; but your lady has dropp'd some hints, as if you wish'd to stifle all further enquiry. Pray, Sir Robert, be candid and open. This, Sir, I think, I have a right to demand.

Sir Rob. Doubtless. Nor do I wish to conceal :— here is room for suspicion, I own ; so far Lady Riscouter is right ; but yet, Lydia——

Sir James. You have then seen her, Sir Robert——

Sir Rob. Not ten minutes ago. Her surprise seem'd so sincere, and so artless, and——

Sir James. Without doubt——

Sir Rob. And such strong marks of truth, both in her words, and her looks, that I confess——perhaps it was a fatherly weakness, I could not help giving credit to all that she said.

Sir James. You did her but justice, I am sure. I will pawn my life upon her honour and faith.

Sir Rob. But yet how to reconcile——for, Sir James, I will be impartial ; some accounts I have had——

Sir James. Time can only do that. Deep laid designs are not discovered at once. If we can but get at the clue.——And what steps you have taken ? have you been, or sent to the printer's ?

Sir Rob. No. I did think of going, but my lady persuaded me, that the step would be wrong.

Sir James. For which she had very good reasons, no doubt. Will you give me leave to accompany you this morn'g ?

Sir Rob. If you think it right.

Sir James. The very first thing you should do.

Sir Rob. But should not we consult my lady about it ?

Sir James. The very last thing you should do.

Sir Rob. And why so ?

Sir James. I must beg to conceal my reasons at present, I too, have my suspicions, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. You have.

Sir James. Which I fancy you will soon find to be better founded than those of your family.

Sir Rob. Not unlikely, Sir James.

Sir James. Come, Sir, my chariot is ready.

Sir Rob. I attend you, Sir James.

End of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Enter Robin, and a Servant of Sir Robert's.

Robin.

MY service to Miss Kitty, and I should be happy to have the honour of her ear a moment.

Ser. Of her ear !

Rob. These low fellows know nothing of the phrases in fashion, mere Vandals and Goats : but I must accommodate myself to their country. Will you tell Miss Kitty Combrush, that I should be glad to speak to her, when she is at leisure ?

Ser. Now I understand what you mean, that will I, Master Robin. *[Exit.]*

Rob. Damn'd provoking however, to have our ship sunk just as we were entering the port ; this could not happen but by the contrivance of some of the crew : our captain too is most horribly hurt. This jade, I am convinc'd, is in the whole of the plot ; but her own art, and the skill of her prompter, will make it difficult to get at the bottom.

Enter

Enter Kitty.

Kitty. Bless me, Mr. Robin, after what has pass'd, I little expected to see you again at our house.

Rob. What injustice both to me and to yourself !

Kitty. How so, Mr. Robin ?

Rob. To your powerful attractions, and my proper discernment.

Kitty. I did not know I had any such things, Mr. Robin.

Rob. Infinite ! but above your penetration is the most surprizing to me. The conjuror in the Old Bailey is a fool compar'd to Miss Kitty. You are absolutely as knowing as one of the Civils, if the latter part of your prediction was but as fully accomplish'd.

Kitty. What was that ?

Rob. Our cohabitation in the same house, notwithstanding——

Kitty. Time may bring that about, Mr. Robin.

Rob. I don't comprehend how that can happen.

Kitty. No ! why, to make your master amends for the loss of Miss Lydia, suppose we were to give him Miss Lucy——

Rob. D'ye call that making my master amends ?

Kitty. She is a good showy girl, and her fortune——

Rob. Will be no temptation to him, I know he detests her.

Kitty. Indeed !

Rob. Cordially. So that if that be the only means, I have nothing left but despair. Oh ! Miss Kitty, think what misery ! that tender frame has a tear for pity, I'm sure ; to be deprived of the warmest wish of my life, to be cut off for ever——

Kitty. And do you really think as you say ?

Rob. Nothing but an amiable ignorance of your own charms, could for a moment induce you to doubt it.

Kitty. Suppose then, Mr. Robin, we were to live under our own roof, instead of that of another, don't you think it would be mending the matter ?

Rob. It would be Elysium, my angel. But how to get at the means ?

Kitty.

Kitty. If that is your objection, they may be easily found.

Rob. Does my lovely Kitty think I can have any other?

Kitty. Then since that is the case, Mr. Robin. is it but right I should explain to you, what I meant, by my riddle, this morning. But see that we are safe.

Rob. Not a soul.

Kitty. You must know, then, that this whole affair of Miss Lydia is my lady's contrivance.

Rob. What, is that whole story a fiction?

Kitty. A mere sham; nothing else; and to bring about Sir James's marriage with Lucy, her motive.

Rob. I conceive.

Kitty. Now, as the project would not do without my assistance, my lady gave me (here it is, stuck in my stays) a note for five hundred pounds, if the match is broke off; and a thousand, should Miss Lucy's take place.

Rob. Hum—hum—hum—500—hum—hum—Rebecca Riscouter—it is just as you say.

Kitty. Now, as matters stand, you see I am entitled to the first 500 directly, and, with your assistance, perhaps the other may follow.

Rob. Not unlikely. But hold a little, dear Kitty, a little caution may not be amiss. This mistress of your's is a damn'd artful woman; she has trick'd others, and won't scruple cheating of you.

Kitty. I don't understand you.

Rob. It is not quite clear that this note is a good one.

Kitty. How!

Rob. I mean such a one as she will be obliged hereafter to pay.

Kitty. Then the business shall be blown up in an instant.

Rob. Too late: she will laugh at you when her ends are obtain'd.

Kitty. Then what steps can we take?

Rob. There is an old master of mine, who lives in Brick-court in the temple, as cunning a cur as ever hang'd an innocent man, or sav'd a rogue from the gallows. I'll run, and ask his opinion.

Kitty.

Kitty. But won't that be betraying our secret?

Rob. Counsellors, like confessors, are bound not to reveal their client's confession: besides, I can easily conceal the name of the party.

Kitty. You will come immediately back?

Rob. In an instant, unless I have your leave to go a step further.

Kitty. Further!

Rob. To Doctors Commons, for a little bit of parchment, that will soon unite us for ever.

Kitty. O law! you are in a vast prodigious great hurry; but, I think, Mr. Robin, you must do as you please.

Rob. Thus let me acknowledge your kind condescension: For a moment then, my dear Kitty, adieu. [*Exit Kitty.*] So, now I have the means in my power to re-settle all our matters again.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE, A Printer's.

Margin discovered with News-papers, Account-Books, &c.

Mar. September the 9th. Sold twelve hundred and thirty. June the 20th. Two thousand and six. Good increase for the time, considering too that the winter has been pretty pacific: dabbled but little in treasons, and not remarkably scurrilous, unless, indeed, in a few personal cases. We must season higher to keep up the demand. Writers in Journals, like rope-dancers, to engage the public attention, must venture their necks every step they take. The pleasure people feel, arises from the risques that we run—what's the matter?

Enter Dingey.

Din. Mr. Hyson has left the Answer to his last letter on East India affairs.

Mar. A lazy rascal, now his letter is forgot, he comes with an answer. Besides, the subject is stale: Return it again. Are all our people in waiting?

Din.

Din. The Attorney General to the paper, that answers the law cases, is not come yet.

Mar. Oh! that's Ben Bond'em the Bailiff; prudently done, perhaps he has a writ against one of our authors—Bid them enter, and call over their names.

Din. Walk in, Gentlemen.

Enter Pepper, Plaister, Rumour, Forge'em, Fibber, Comma, Caustic, O'Flam, and others.

Dig. Politicians, pro and con, Messieurs Pepper and Plaister.

Pep. Plaif. Here.

Mar. Pepper and Plaister, as both the houses are up, I shall adjourn your Political Warfare 'till their meeting again.

Pep. Don't you think the public would bear one skirmish more before we close the campaign? I have a trimmer here in my hand.

Plaif. To which I have as tart a retort.

Mar. No, no; enough for the present. It is, Plaister, the proper timing the subject, that gives success to our labours. The conductor of a News-paper, like a good cook, should always serve up things in their season: who eats oysters in June? Plays and Parliament Houses are winter provisions.

Pep. Then half the satire and salt will be lost: Besides, if the great man should happen to die, or go out.

Mar. Pshaw! it will do as well for the great man that comes in. Political papers should bear vamping; like sermons, change but the application and text, and they will suit all persons and seasons.

Plaif. True enough; but mean time, what can we turn to; for we shall be quite out of work?

Mar. I warrant you, if you an't idle, there's business enough, the press teems with fresh publications—Histories, translations, voyages—

Pep. That take up as much time to read as to make.

Mar. And what with letters from Paris or Spaw, inundations, elopements, dismal effects of thunder and lightning, remarkable causes at country assizes, and
with

with changing the ministry now and then, you will have employment, enough for the summer.

Plaif. And so enter upon our old trade in the winter?

Mar. Aye, or for variety, as it must be tiresome to take always one side; you, Pepper, may go over to administration, and Plaister will join opposition. The novelty will perhaps give fresh spirits to both.

Pep. With all my heart. A bold writer has now no encouragement to sharpen his pen. I have known the day when there was no difficulty in getting a lodging in Newgate; but now, all I can say, won't procure me a warrant from a Westminster Justice.

Mar. You say right, hard times, master Pepper, for persecution is the very life and soul of our trade; but don't despair, who knows how soon matters may mend? gentlemen, you may draw back.—Read the next.

Din. Criticks—Thomas Comma, and Christopher Caustic.

Mar. Where are they?

Din. As you could not find them in constant employment, they are engaged by the great, to do the articles in the Monthly Reviews.

Mar. I thought they were done by Doctor Doubtful, the Deist.

Din. Formerly, but now he deals in Manuscript sermons, writes religious essays for one of the Journals.

Mar. Then he will soon sink. I foresaw what would come of his dramming. Go on.

Din. Collectors of paragraphs, Roger Rumour, and Phelim O'Flam.

Rum. Flam. Here.

Din. Fibber and Forge'em, composers and makers of ditto.

Fib. For. Here.

Mar. Well, Rumour, what have you brought for the press?

Rum. I have been able to bring you no Positives.

Mar. How, no Positives?

Rum. Not one. I have a probability from the court end of the town; and two good supposes out of the city.

Mar.

Mar. Hand them here—[reads.] “ It is probable, “ that if the King of Prussia should join the Czarina, “ France will send a fleet into the Mediterranean, “ which, by giving umbrage to the Maritime powers, “ will involve Spain by its Family Compact. To which, “ if Austria should refuse to accede, there may be a “ powerful diversion in Poland, made conjunctly by “ Sweden and Denmark. And if Sardinia and Sicily “ abide by the treaties, the German Princess can never “ be neuter; Italy will become the seat of war, and “ all Europe soon set in a flame.—Vastly well, master Rumour, finely confused, and very alarming. Dingey, give him a shilling for this. I hope no other paper has got it?

Rum. Oh fie! did you ever know me guilty of such a—

Mar. True, true, now let us see your supposes—[Reads.] “ It is supposed, if Alderman Mango should “ surrender his gown, he will be succeeded by Mr. “ Deputy Drylips, and if my Lord Mayor should continue ill of the gout, it is supposed the swan-hopping “ will cease for this season.—This last suppose is fudged in, why, would you cram these upon me for a couple?

Rum. As distinct as can be.

Mar. Fye, remember our bargain. You agreed to do the court of Aldermen for six pence.

Rum. What if a Common Hall should be called?

Mar. Oh! then you are to have three-pence a motion, I know that, very well: I am sure no gentleman can accuse me of being sneaking. Dingey, give him six pence for his supposes, Well, Phelim O'Flam, any deaths in your district?

O'Flam. The devil a one.

Mar. How! none?

O'Flam. O yes, a parcel of nobodies, that died worth nothing at all. Fellows that can't pay for a funeral. Upon my conscience, I can't think what becomes of the folks for my part, I believe, all the people who live in town, fall down dead in the country, and then too, since doctor Dispatch is gone to Bath, patients linger so long.

Mar.

Mar. Indeed !

O'Flam. To be sure they do. Why, I waited at the Jolly Topers, a matter of two days and a half, for the last breath of Lady Dy Dropsy. for fear some other collector should catch it.

Mar. A long time indeed.

O'Flam. Wasn't it ? considering that she had two consultations besides, devilish tough. Mr. Margin, I shall quit the mortality walk, so provide yourself as soon as you can.

Mar. I hope not.

O'Flam. Why, what will I do ? I am sure the deaths wont keep me alive, you see I am already stripp'd to my shrowd ; since November, the suicide season, I have not got salt to my porridge.

Enter Sir Thomas Tradewell.

Sir Tho. Is your name Matthew Margin ?

Mar. It is, and what then ?

Sir Tho. Then, pray what right had you to kill me in your last saturday's paper ?

Mar. Kill you !

Sir Tho. Ay, Sir, here the article is ; surely the law has some punishment for such insolent rascals as you.

Mar. Punishment ! and for what ? but, after all, what injury have you sustain'd ?

Sir Tho. Infinite. All my agents are come post out of the country, my house is crouded with cousins, to be present at the opening my will, and there had been (as it is known she has a very good jointure) no less than three proposals of marriage already made to my relict.

Mar. Let me look at the paragraph, [*Reads.*] " Last night, after eating a hearty supper, died suddenly, " with his mouth full of custard, Sir Thomas Trade- " well, knight, an amiable companion, an affectionate " relation, and a friend to the poor."—*O'Flam*, this is some blunder of yours ; for you see, here the gentleman is, and alive.

O'Flam. So he says, but the devil a one in this case would I believe but himself ; because why, I was told it
by

by Jeremy O'Turlough, his own body chairman, my dear ; by the same token, I treated him with a pint of porter for the good news.

Sir Tho. Vastly oblig'd to you, Mr. O'Flam, but I have nothing to do with this wretched fellow ; it is you, Margin, shall answer for this.

Mar. Why, Sir Thomas, it is impossible but now and then we must kill a man by mistake. And in some measure to make amends, you see what a good character the paper has given you.

Sir Tho. Character !

Mar. Aye, Sir, I can tell you I have had a crown for putting in many a worse.

O'Flam. Aye, Sir Thomas, consider of that, only think what a comfort it is, to live long enough after you are dead, to read such a good account of yourself in the papers.

Sir Tho. Ha ! ha ! ha ! what a ridiculous rascal !—but I would advise you, gentlemen, not to take such liberties with me for the future. [Exit.

O'Flam. Indeed and we won't ; and I here give Mr. Margin my word, that you shan't die again, as long as you live ; unless, indeed, we get it from under your own hand.

Enter Sir Robert Riscounter, and Sir James Biddulph.

Sir Rob. Where is this Margin, this impudent, rascally Printer ?

Mar. Hey day ! what's the matter now ?

Sir James. Curb your choler, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. A pretty fellow, indeed, that every man's and very woman's reputation must be subject to the power of his poisonous pen.

Sir James. A little patience, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. A land of liberty this ! I will maintain it, the tyranny exercised by that fellow, and those of his tribe is more despotic and galling, than the most absolute monarch's in Asia.

Sir James. Well, but——

Sir Rob.

Sir Rob. Their thrones only claim a right over your property, whilst this mungrel, squatting upon his joint stool, by a single line, proscribes and ruins your reputation at once.

Sir James. Sir Robert, let me crave—

Sir Rob. And no situation is secure from their insults. I wonder every man is not afraid to peep into a paper, as it is more than probable that he may meet with a paragraph, that will make him unhappy for the rest of his life.

Mar. But, Gentlemen, what is all this business about?

Sir Rob. About? zounds, Sir, what right had you to ruin my daughter?

Mar. I? I know nothing of you nor your daughter.

Sir Rob. Sir James Biddulph, you have it, produce the paper.

Sir James. There is no occasion for that, the affair is so recent, I dare say the Gentleman will remember the passage; this, Sir, is the Banker, the father, with whose daughter you was pleased to take those insolent freedoms, this morning.

Sir Rob. And this, Sir, the amiable Baronet, from the West end of the Town.

Mar. I recollect. Well, gentlemen, if you have brought any paragraphs to contradict the report, I am ready to insert them directly.

Sir Rob. And so, you rascal, you want us to furnish fresh food for your paper?

Mar. I do all I can to keep my scales even; the charge hangs heavy here; on the other side, you may throw in the defence, then see which will weigh down the other.

Sir Rob. Indeed, Sir James Biddulph, if he does that—

Sir James. That! can that paltry expedient atone for his crime? will the snow that is sullied recover its lustre? so tender and delicate, Sir Robert, is the fame of a lady, that once tainted, it is tarnish'd for ever.

Sir Rob. True enough.

Mar:

Mar. I could bear no ill-will to your daughter, as I know nothing about her.

Sir Rob. Indeed, Sir James, I don't see how he could.

Sir James. Is his being the instrument of another man's malice, a sufficient excuse?

Sir Rob. So far from it, that it enhances the guilt. Zounds, Sir James, you are a Parliament Man, why don't you put an end to this practice?

Mar. Ay, let them attack the press, if—

Sir Rob. Have a care of that; no, no, that must not be done.

Sir James. No man, Sir Robert, honours that sacred shield of freedom more than myself.

Sir Rob. I dare say.

Sir James. But I would not have it to shelter these pests, who point those poison'd arrows against the peace of mankind.

Sir Rob. By no means in the world. Let them be dragg'd from behind it directly.

Mar. Ay, do destroy the watchful dogs that guard and cover your flocks.

Sir James. You guard, you cover!

Mar. Ay, who but us alarm the nation when bad designs are on foot?

Sir Rob. In that respect, they are very useful no doubt.

Sir James. Are they therefore entitled to give the alarm, when no such design is intended?

Sir Rob. By no means. A pack of factious, infamous scoundrels.

Mar. It is we that supply the defects of the laws.

Sir James. You!

Mar. By stigmatizing those offenders that they cannot reach.

Sir Rob. That, indeed, serves to keep the guilty in awe.

Sir James. And is a pretence for making the innocent the butts of their malice.

Sir Rob. True, true, all is fish that comes to their nets.

Sir

Sir James. Besides, their slander is scattered so generally, and with so little discretion, that the deformity of vice is destroyed.

Sir Rob. True.

Sir James. Bad men are made worse, by becoming totally callous, and even the good rendered careless, to that source of patriotism, that pride of virtue, the public opinion.

Sir Rob. And they are much in the right on't.

Mar. What, you are a courtier, I reckon? no wonder you wish the press was demolished.

Sir James. If ever that happens, to such miscreants as you 'twill be owing; nor will it surprize me, if all orders concur to give up a great public benefit, for the sake and security of private honour and peace.

Sir Rob. Nor me neither.

Mar. You would consent then to surrender the press?

Sir Rob. I would sooner consent to be hang'd.

Sir James. And its unbounded licence continue?

Sir Rob. I would much rather see it on fire.

Mar. With respect to its general use——

Sir Rob. Not the smallest doubt can be made.

Sir James. But, Sir Robert, then the abuse——

Sir Rob. Is what no mortal can bear.

Mar. But, Sir Robert, you would but just now——

Sir Rob. I confess it, I did.

Sir James. Ay, but that was, Sir Robert, because.—

Sir Rob. For no other reason in life.

Mar. My observation you allowed to be——

Sir Rob. Pointed.

Sir James. And my reply——

Sir Rob. Conclusive as could be.

Mar. But then——

Sir Rob. To be sure.

Sir James. Because why——

Sir Rob. You are quite in the right.

O'Flam. Upon my soul, they have got the old gentleman into such puzzlement, that I don't believe he knows what he wishes himself. Stand by and let me clear up this matter a little. Hearkee, Mr. Sir Robert, if I understand your maning at all, it is, that provided
people

people could be prevented from publishing, you are willing the press should be free.

Sir Rob. That was my meaning no doubt.

O'Flam. Upon my conscience, and nothing but reason. There, I believe, we are all of us agreed. How seldom would people differ, if once we would get them to be all of one mind? And now this difference is whole and compos'd, let me try if I can't make up the other. I understand here, old gentleman, you have had a daughter abused.

Sir Rob. Most foully.

O'Flam. And you want to know who was the author?

Sir Rob. That was my sole business here.

O'Flam. Then why could not you say so at first, without all this bothering and bawling? Well, master Margin, come give the old buck satisfaction.

Mar. It was anonymous.

O'Flam. Upon my soul, and I thought so. That is the most damnedst, impudent son of a bitch, he had like to have brought me into three or four scrapes, by fathering his lies upon me.

Sir James. Will you give us leave to look at the hand?

Mar. Freely, this is the paper.

Sir James. Sir Robert, do you recollect to have seen this writing before?

Sir Rob. It is James's, I know it as well as my own: here are his B's, his G's, and his T's.

Sir James. So I guess'd. Will you trust the paper with us?

Sir Rob. Let him get it again, if he can.—Sir James, I shall expect you at home. [Exit.

Mar. I hope no bad use will be made of it.

Sir James. The worst use has already been made of it; but at parting, Mr. Margin, let me give you a piece of advice. Take care how you provoke the public patience too far. You have set the law at defiance, and long reign'd uncontroul'd, I confess; but don't wonder if the subjects of your slander forget there are laws in their

their turn, and, valuing an honest name more than their lives, should expose their lives to revenge it. [Exit.

O'Flam. Upon my soul, Mr. Margin, very wholesome advice, and will do you much good if you take it; but, above all, rid your hands of James Anonymous as soon as you can; you know it was he got you that beating. — That fellow has brought you into more scrapes than all your authors together.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Gentlemen, the milk porridge is ready.

All. Let us start fair I beseech you. [Exit.

Enter Lady Riscounter, Lucy, and Kitty.

Lady Ris. Sir James Biddulph is gone?

Kitty. Yes, Madam, and with him my master.

Lady Ris. Sir Robert! to what place, can you guess?

Kitty. I should think, by what I overheard, to the printer's.

Lady Ris. To the printer's! of what use can that be?

Kitty. I can't say; but your ladyship, I hope, will excuse me.

Lady Ris. Excuse you, why child, what's the matter?

Kitty. I have heard some whispering among the clerks, as if things were not quite so well with my master.

Lady Ris. What, some little disappointments in trade?

Kitty. Much worse, I am afraid; I don't know what it means; but they say an extent is brought into the house.

Lady Ris. With all my heart; let what will happen, it can be of little importance to me.

Lucy. No, Madam!

Lady Ris. No, child, you can't suppose, but upon my marriage, I took care, at all events, to secure a proper provision.

Lucy. Indeed! can that be done?

Lady Ris. A common caution, my dear; don't you see Mrs. Paduasoy rides in her coach, whilst half her husband's creditors are in gaol.

Lucy

Lucy. Is that the case ?

Lady Rif. If wives were to have any thing to do with those kind of creatures, who d'ye think would marry with people in business ? and now I think on't, it will be so much the better ; for the father's failure must in some measure fall on the daughter.

Lucy. True ; but your ladyship saw Sir James Bidulph.

Lady Rif. For a moment only, my dear.

Lucy. Well, Madam, and——

Lady Rif. I only just threw out a hint ; to be more explicit now, would make him suspicious ; we must give him time to digest his disappointment.

Kitty. As I live, Miss Lydia is coming.

Lady Rif. Lydia !

Enter Lydia.

Lydia. I beg your ladyship's pardon, for intruding without your permission ; but, my unfortunate situation will, I hope, plead my excuse : I come, Madam, to beg your protection.

Lady Rif. Mine, child ?

Lydia. Your assistance, in detecting the authors of this horrid design.

Lady Rif. That, child, is properly your father's concern.

Lydia. True, Madam ; but the relation your ladyship bears to his family might, I hope, induce you to do me this justice.

Lady Rif. Justice, Lydia !—as it is my duty, I shall ever be ready to give my advice.

Lydia. That, Madam, is all I want.

Lady Rif. As this affair has made such a noise, there remains but one step to be taken.

Lydia. Which is——

Lady Rif. A marriage with James.

Lydia. With James ! and so sanctify the scandalous story.

Lady Rif. It may be alledged by the family, that the ceremony had pass'd before the detection.

Lydia.

Lydia. Detection ! I hope your ladyship does not suppose there is the smallest foundation ?

Lady Rif. That I shall not pretend to determine. But, at all events, you are in the right to deny it.

Lydia. Your ladyship's indifference shocks me more than the—Your daughter, Lucy, will do me justice I am sure, she has been privy to every—

Lucy. Me, Miss ? I beg pardon for that : how should I know your intrigues ? I beg you will not involve me in your guilt.

Lydia. Nay, then it is in vain to struggle ; I see, my ruin is resolv'd.

Enter Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. Where is Lady Riscounter ? well, my dear, we have got to the bottom of this infernal business at last—here, here it is, in the rascal's own hand.

Lady Rif. Sir Robert !

Sir Rob. Why, the paragraph was sent to the printer's by James.

Lady Rif. Well ?

Sir Rob. So that you see proves the forgery plain.

Lady Rif. Now I think it makes the fact more apparent.

Sir Rob. How ?

Lady Rif. By the confession of one of the parties.

Sir Rob. That I confess, as it was voluntary—

Lady Rif. Makes it amount to a positive proof.

Sir Rob. It looks very suspicious indeed.

Enter Sir James Biddulph.

Sir Rob. Here my lady, Sir James, thinks, that instead of clearing, this paper only serves to convict her.

Sir James. Is that your ladyship's judgment ?

Lady Rif. Quite to a demonstration, Sir James.

Sir James. But his policy.

Lady Rif. Obvious enough ; to force the family to solicit his marrying the girl, as a favour.

Sir James. That, indeed!

Lady Ris. With the hopes, perhaps, of obtaining some additional advantage.

Sir Rob. In return, no doubt, for his great condescension. An infamous——

Sir James. I should have thought the young lady's private fortune, and person, especially to one of his rank, a very sufficient inducement. But this Mr. James is an absolute Machiavel.

Sir Rob. As sly a dog as ever existed.

Sir James. But could not we see him, Sir Robert?

Sir Rob. The rascal is run off.

Sir James. Indeed!

Sir Rob. We have search'd for him all the town over.

Sir James. That is unlucky, as I should have been glad to have ask'd him a question. I believe it is unnecessary to apologize to the family, for any part I take in this business.

Sir Rob. We are all highly obliged.

Sir James. But I have received a letter, the contents of which astonish me much.

Sir Rob. About the matter in hand?

Sir James. Indeed the writer is but a dependant of mine, but his veracity is out of the question, the facts must speak for themselves. Mrs. Kitty, you will be kind enough to stay here for a moment.

Kitty. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir James. If the charge is false, I am sure, Lady Riscounter will pardon me for the sake of the motive. If true, she in her turn, will stand in want of all our forgiveness.

Lady Ris. Me! who will dare to impeach my conduct, Sir James?

Sir James. Your ladyship's patience, a moment. This paper, Sir Robert, charges Lady Riscounter with being the sole contriver of this villainous project.

Sir Rob. How!

Lady Ris. Me!

Sir James. With a view of dissolving the contract between your fair daughter and me.

Sir Rob. To what purpose? what end?

Sir

Sir James. One that does me too much honour, I own, the bringing about a union between Miss Lucy and me.

Lady Ris. A most probable story, indeed: your informer's name, if you please.

Sir James. A servant who has oft attended me here.

Lady Ris. And he receiv'd it from——

Sir James. One of your ladyship's women; there she stands, I believe.

Lydia. Is it possible that you, Kitty——

Sir Rob. Patience, Lydia, a moment.

Lady Ris. And you think this paltry plot, obviously fram'd by a couple of servants, (unless you condescend to be the contriver yourself) will justify you in bringing this charge against a person of my rank and condition.

Sir Rob. Fie, fie, Sir James, that is too presumptuous indeed.

Sir James. Why, I should not have ventur'd, I believe, if I had not to produce a more unexceptionable witness than these.

Lady Ris. Name the person directly.

Sir James. Lady Riscounter herself.

Sir Rob. What?

Sir James. There is a little billet contain'd in this letter, where your ladyship promises a capital sum, when some certain services are fully perform'd.

Sir Rob. By your leave, Sir James, let me look. Oh, clear, clear, it is her hand, there is no denying of this.

Sir James. I fancy Mrs. Kitty will own it. Otherwise my servant is below to confront her.

Sir Rob. Well, what reply do you make to all this?

Kitty. I beg pardon, Sir, of my mistress, and you.

Sir Rob. Pardon.

Kitty. I own the accusation is just, though I little thought Mr. Robin would betray me.

Sir Rob. Do you? and what an ungrateful wretch must you be? you have been but a poor instrument only. But is it possible you, Lady Riscounter, could so entirely forget what you owe to me, and your——

Lady Rif. I see, Sir Robert, you are so far prepossess'd, that all I can say——

Sir Rob. Say, Madam, what can be said for such——

Lady Rif. Nay, Sir, I am not going to make a formal defence, it is not worth my while, nor would you have leisure to hear it: if you will walk down, you will find another sort of business, that demands your attention.

Sir Rob. Madam!

Lady Rif. The house fill'd with a new kind of customers.

Lydia. *Sir Rob.* *Sir James.* How!

Lady Rif. Only an extent, to seize on all his effects.

Lydia. *Sir Rob.* *Sir James.* Is it possible!

Lady Rif. The world will therefore see how ill I am treated—but don't imagine, Sir Robert, that the provision I derive from her father, shall be lavish'd to lessen your debts, or be employ'd in support of their author.

Lucy. Your ladyship will have more prudence, no doubt.

Lady Rif. No, child, we will quit this mansion directly, and leave him for consolation to the care of his daughter.

Lydia. A more precious trust, I could never receive. Your treachery to me, Madam, I could both despise and forgive; but your insolent triumph, at the distress of an unfortunate husband, gives you a pre-eminence above the worst of your sex. If, Sir, what you are pleas'd to call mine, can either reinstate, or assist you, I beg it may be all employ'd in the service.

Sir Rob. Nay, pr'ythee, Lydia——

Lydia. You see, Sir James Biddulph, there are new obstacles oppos'd to your purpose.

Sir James. If you mean those her ladyship has been pleas'd to produce, they add only an additional strength to my wishes. The piety with which this great, this first duty is discharg'd, must accompany every other relation in life. I applaud, and shall be happy to join in your purpose.

Lady Rif. Come, Lucy, let us leave these romantick creatures

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creatures together, they are only fit for each other ; when your effects are convey'd to proper trustees, I shall take care to put in my claim.

[*Exeunt Lady Riscounter and Lucy.*]

Sir Rob. Unfeeling, insolent woman ! but thy goodness, Lydia, supplies every loss, nor will my creditors, when they find I never deceiv'd them, take advantage of thy filial affection.

Enter a Clerk.

What now ?

Clerk. The Dutch mail is arrived.

Sir Rob. Any private letters from Holland ?

Clerk. Your correspondents, Sir, have honour'd your bills.

Sir Rob. And discharg'd them ?

Clerk. Every one.

Sir Rob. And the report of their failing——

Clerk. Was without the smallest foundation.

Sir Rob. Heaven be prais'd ; now, Lydia, thy father can look again with confidence in the face of his friends.

Lydia. A more real transport could never have reach'd me !

Sir Rob. I know it, Lydia, I know it. This gentleman will both thank and reward you.

Clerk. Sir, I would beg just to——

Sir Rob. I guess what you mean ; some inquisitive persons below ; they shall be satisfied soon. I will attend them directly. [Exit Clerk.]

Sir James. Give me leave to join in the general joy. But what, Sir Robert, shall we do with this paper ? I fancy my man is in waiting ; Robin.

Enter Robin.

Robin. Sir.

Sir James. You have been of singular service to-day, which I shall take good care to acknowledge. The worth of this note, as the conditions have fail'd——

Robin. Like many more of its kindred, is reduc'd to waste paper, your honour ; but as this happy turn has

been chiefly owing to Kitty, I hope she will be restor'd to favour again.

Sir James. But consider, Robin, that was not her intention.

Robin. But recollect, Sir, the temptation—

Sir Rob. But the treachery—

Robin. Five hundred pounds.

Sir Rob. That is true—as many, her superiors, tho' perhaps not her betters, are daily detected in doing things more criminal for less consideration, it is some excuse, I confess. But what says my Lydia?

Lydia. I shall be directed by you.

Sir Rob. And now, my children, nothing remains but the last act, to establish your union, and if (as I am resolved to disengage myself from that bad woman, and the other cares of this world) you will suffer me to be a partaker of your domestic felicity——

Sir James, Lydia. You cannot in any thing oblige us so much.

Sir Rob. That is all I have to ask of you, or the world. [Exeunt.

14 N0334

F I N I S.

THE
LAME LOVER,

A
COMEDY.



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TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
Francis Seymour Conway,
EARL OF HERTFORD,
LORD CHAMBERLAIN OF
HIS MAJESTY'S HOUSHOLD,
TO WHOSE
POLITENESS AND CANDOUR
THE AUTHOR
OWES EVERY ACKNOWLEDGMENT,
THIS COMEDY IS
GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST OBLIGED AND MOST

OBEDIENT SERVANT.

North End.

SAM. FOOTE.



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P R O L O G U E.

Written and Spoken by Mr. GENTLEMAN.

PROLOGUES, like cards of compliment, we find,
Most as unmeaning as politely kind ;
To beg a favour, or to plead excuse,
Of both appears to be the gen'ral use.

Shall my words, tipt with flattery, prepare
A kind exertion of your tend'rest care ?
Shall I present our author to your sight,
All pale and trembling for his fate this night ?
Shall I solicit the most pow'rful arms
To aid his cause—the force of beauty's charms ?
Or tell each critic, his approving taste
Must give the sterling stamp, wherever plac'd ?
This might be done—but so to seek applause
Argues a conscious weakness in the cause.
No—let the Muse in simple truth appear,
REASON and NATURE are the judges here :
If by their strict and self-describing laws,
The sev'ral characters to-night she draws ;
If from the whole a pleasing piece is made,
On the true principles of light and shade ;
Struck with the harmony of just design,
Your eyes—your ears—your hearts, will all combine
To grant applause :—but if an erring hand
Gross disproportion marks in motley band.
If the group'd figures false connections show,
And glaring colours without meaning glow,
Your wounded feelings, turn'd a diff'rent way,
Will justly damn—th' *abortion* of a play.

P R O L O G U E.

As Farquhar has observ'd, our English law,
Like a fair spreading oak, the Muse should draw,
By Providence design'd, and wisdom made
For honesty to thrive beneath its shade ;
Yet from its boughs some insects shelter find,
Dead to each nobler feeling of the mind,
Who thrive, alas ! too well, and never cease
To prey on justice, property, and peace.

At such to-night, with other *legal* game,
Our vent'rous author takes satiric aim ;
And brings, he hopes, originals to view,
Nor pilfers from th' Old Magpie, nor the New*.
But will to Candour chearfully submit ;
She reigns in boxes, galleries, and pit.

* Alluding to Mr. Garrick's Prologue to the Jubilee.

14 N033.

Sir L.
Serjeant
Colonel
JACK
Mr V.
Mr. P.
First S.
Second

Mrs.
CHAMBERLAIN
Mrs. S.
BETT

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir LUKE LIMP,	—	—	<i>Mr. Foote.</i>
Serjeant CIRCUIT,	—	—	<i>Mr. Vandermere.</i>
Colonel SECRET,	—	—	<i>Mr. Robson.</i>
JACK,	—	—	<i>Mr. Weston,</i>
Mr WOODFORD,	—	—	<i>Mr. Knowles.</i>
Mr. FAIRPLAY,	—	—	<i>Mr. Wheeler,</i>
First SERVANT,	—	—	<i>Mr. Dancer.</i>
Second SERVANT.	—	—	<i>Mr. Griffiths.</i>

W O M E N.

Mrs. CIRCUIT,	—	—	<i>Mrs. Gardner.</i>
CHARLOT,	—	—	<i>Mrs. Jewell.</i>
Mrs. SIMPER,	—	—	<i>Mrs. Saunders.</i>
BETTY.	—	—	<i>Mrs. Read.</i>

Dramatic Performance

14 N063

THE

LAME LOVER.

A C T I.

Enter Serjeant CIRCUIT and CHARLOT.

Charlot.

I Tell you, Sir, his love to me is all a pretence : it is amazing that you, who are so acute, so quick in discerning on other occasions, should be so blind upon this.

Serj. But where are your proofs, Charlot ? What signifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot support ?

Char. Surely, Sir, strong circumstances in every court should have weight.

Serj. So they have collaterally, child, that is by way as it were of corroboration, or where matters are doubtful ; then indeed, as Plowden wisely, observes, “ *Les circonstances ajoutent beaucoup de poids aux faits.* ” — You understand me ?

Char. Not perfectly well.

Serj. Then to explain by case in point ; A, we will suppose, my dear, robs B of a watch upon Hounslow heath—dy'e mind, child ?

Char. I do, Sir.

Serj.

Serj. A, is taken up and indicted ; B swears positively to the identity of A.—Dy'e observe ?

Char. Attentively.

Serj. Then what does me A, but sets up the alibi C, to defeat the affidavit of B.—You take me.

Char. Clearly.

Serj. So far then you see the ballance is even.

Char. True.

Serj. But then to turn the scale, child, against A, in favour of B, they produce the circumstance D, viz. B's watch found in the pocket of A ; upon which, the testimony of C being contradicted by B,—no, by D,—why then A, that is to say C,—no D,—joining B, they convict C,—no, no, A,—against the affidavit of C.—So this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

Char. Very obliging, Sir. But suppose now, sir, it should appear that the attention of Sir Luke Limp is directed to some other object, would not that induce you—

Serj. Other object ! Where ?

Char. In this very house.

Serj. Here ! why the girl is non compos. ; there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigals.

Char. No, Sir ?

Serj. No.

Char. Yes, Sir, one person else.

Serj. Who is that ?

Char. But remember, Sir, my accusation is confined to Sir Luke.

Serj. Well, well.

Char. Suppose then, Sir, those powerful charms which made a conquest of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke ?

Serj. Why, hussy, you don't hint at your mother-in-law ?

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I do.

Serj. Ay ; why this is point blank treason against my sovereign authority : but can you, Charlot, bring proof of any overt acts ?

Char. Overt acts !

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Serj. Ay ; that is any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth is sufficient ; then let 'em demur if they dare.

Char. I can't say that, Sir ; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

Serj. Which ?

Char. In those cases a very infallible one—the eye.

Serj. Pshaw ! nonsense and stuff.—The eye !—The eye has no authority in a court of law.

Char. Perhaps not, Sir ; but it is a decisive evidence in a court of love.

Serj. Hark you, huffy, why you would not file an information against the virtue of madam your mother ; you would not insinuate that she has been guilty of crim. con. ?

Char. Sir, you mistake me ; it is not the lady, but the gentleman I am about to impeach.

Serj. Have a care, Charlot ! I see on what ground your action is founded—jealousy.

Char. You were never more deceiv'd in your life ; for it is impossible, my dear Sir, that jealousy can subsist without love.

Serj. Well.

Char. And from that passion (thank heaven) I am pretty free at present.

Serj. Indeed !

Char. A sweet object to excite tender desires !

Serj. And why not, huffy ?

Char. First as to his years.

Serj. What then ?

Char. I own, Sir, age procures honor, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

Serj. Mighty well.

Char. And tho' the loss of a leg can't be imputed to Sir Luke Limp as a fault—

Serj. How !

Char. I hope, Sir, at least you will allow it a misfortune.

Serj. Indeed !

Char. A pretty thing truly, for a girl, at my time of life, to be ty'd to a man with one foot in the grave.

Serj.

Serj. One foot in the grave! the rest of his body is not a whit the nearer for that.—There has been only an execution issued against part of his personals, his real estate is unencumbered and free—besides, you see he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry, as a defendant after non-suiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

Char. O! Sir! I know how proud Sir Luke is of his leg, and have often hear him declare; that he would not change his bit of timber for the best flesh and bone in the kingdom.

Serj. There's a hero for you!

Char. To be sure, sustaining unavoidable evils with constancy is a certain sign of greatness of mind.

Serj. Doubtless.

Char. But then to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not I'm afraid be admitted as a vast instance of wisdom, and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to distinguish himself by.

Serj. How does that follow?

Char. By Inuendo.

Serj. Negatur.

Char. Besides, Sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mention'd.

Serj. Cite them.

Char. The paltry ambition of levying and following titles.

Serj. Titles! I don't understand you?

Char. I mean the poverty of fastening in public upon men of distinction, for no other reason but because of their rank; adhering to Sir John till the Baronet is superseded by my Lord; quitting the puny Peer for an Earl; and sacrificing all three to a Duke.

Serj. Keeping good company! a laudable ambition!

Char. True, Sir, if the virtues that procur'd the father a peerage, could with that be entail'd on the son.

Serj. Have a care, hussy—there are several laws against speaking evil of dignities.—

Char. Sir!

Serj. Scandalum magnatum is a statute must not be

trifled with.

trifled with : why you are not one of those vulgar fluts that think a man the worse for being a Lord ?

Char. No, Sir ; I am contented with only, not thinking him the better.

Serj. For all this, I believe, huffy, a right honourable proposal would soon make you alter your mind.

Char. Not unless the proposer had other qualities than what he possesses by patent. Besides, Sir, you know Sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

Serj. Not a whit the less honest for that.

Char. It occasions one evil at least ; that when under its influence, he generally reveals all, sometimes more than he knows.

Serj. Proofs of an open temper, you baggage : but, come, come, all these are but trifling objections.

Char. You mean, Sir, they prove the object a trifle.

Serj. Why you pert jade, do you play on my words ? I say Sir Luke is—

Char. Nobody.

Serj. Nobody ! how the duce do you make that out ? —He is neither person attainted or out-law'd, may in and of his majesty's courts sue or be-sued, appear by attorney, or in propria persona, can acquire, buy, procure, purchase, possess, and inherit, not only personalities, such as goods, and chattels, but even realities, as all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatsoever, and wheresoever.

Char. But, Sir—

Serj. Nay, further, child, he may sell, give, bestow, bequeath, devise, demise, lease, or to farm lett, ditto lands, to any person whomsoever—and—

Char. Without doubt, Sir ; but there are notwithstanding in this town a great number of nobodies, not described by lord Coke.

Serj. Hey !

Char. There is your next door neighbour, Sir Harry Hen, an absolute blank.

Serj. How so, Mrs. Pert ?

Char. What, Sir ! a man who is not suffer'd to hear, see, smell, or in short to enjoy the free use of any one of his senses ; who, instead of having a positive will of his

his own, is deny'd even a paltry negative ; who can neither resolve or reply, consent or deny, without first obtaining the leave of his lady : an absolute monarch to sink into the sneaking state of being a slave to one of his subjects—Oh fye !

Serj. Why, to be sure, Sir Harry Hen, is as I may say—

Char. Nobody, Sir, in the fullest sense of the word—Then your client Lord Solo.

Serj. Heyday!—Why you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious estate and an allow'd judge too of the elegant arts.

Char. O yes, Sir, I am no stranger to that nobleman's attributes ; but then, Sir, please to consider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy ; the direction of his estate, to a rapacious, artful attorney : and as to his skill in the elegant arts, I presume you confine them to painting and music, he is directed in the first by Mynheer Van Eisel, a Dutch dauber ; and in the last is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his lordship's mistress and an opera singer.

Serj. Mercy on us ! at what a rate the jade runs !

Char. In short, Sir, I define every individual who, ceasing to act for himself, becomes the tool, the mere engine of another man's will, at be nothing more than a cypher.

Serj. At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world : but what is all this to Sir Luke ? to him, not one of your cases apply.

Char. Every one—Sir Luke has not a first principle in his whole composition ; not only his pleasures, but even his passions are prompted by others ; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and dressing. Nay, though he is active, and eternally busy, yet his own private affairs are neglected ; and he would not scruple to break an appointment that was to determine a considerable part of his property, in order to exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himself best ; I hear his stump on the stairs.

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Serj. I hope you will preserve a little decency before your lover at least.

Char. Lover! ha! ha!

Enter Sir Luke Limp.

Sir Luke. Mr. Serjeant, your slave—Ah! are you there, my little—O Lord! Miss, let me tell you something for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new christen'd, and have had me for a gossip?

Char. Christen'd! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Then lend me your ear—Why last night, as Colonel Kill'em, Sir William Weezy, Lord Frederick Foretop, and I were carelessly sliding the Renelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damn'd muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who should trip by but an abbess, well known about town, with a smart little nun in her suite. Says Weezy (who, between ourselves, is as husky as hell) Who is that? odds flesh, she's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried Lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been, not to have seen the Harietta before? for you must know Frederick is a bit of Macaroni, and adores the soft Italian termination in *a*.

Char. He does?

Sir Luke. Yes, a delitanti all over.—Before? replied Weezy; crush me if ever I saw any thing half so handsome before!—No! replied I in an instant; Colonel, what will Weezy say when he sees the Charlotta? Hey! you little—

Char. Meaning me, I presume.

Serj. Without doubt; and you have been toasted by that name ever since.

Serj. What a vast fund of spirits he has!

Sir Luke. And why not, my old splitter of causes?

Serj. I was just telling Charlot, that you was not a whit the worse for the loss.

Sir Luke. The worse! much the better, my dear. Consider, I can have neither strain, splint, spavin, or gout; have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man should kick my shins, or tread on my toes.

Serj. Right.

Sir Luke. What d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumsticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

Serj.

Serj. No!

Sir Luke. No, damn it, I am much better.—Look there—Ha!—What is there I am not able to do? To be sure I am a little awkward at running; but then, to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his sum.

Serj. Ay, and I'll go his halves.

Sir Luke. Then as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, because of the croud; but as far as a private set of six couple, or moving a chair minuet, match me who can.

Char. A chair-minuet! I don't understand you.

Sir Luke. Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and chest, which may sitting be as fully displayed, as if one had as many legs as a polypus.—As thus—tol de rol—don't you see?

Serj. Very plain.

Sir Luke. A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature. In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are, with but half the things that we have.

Char. Ay, Sir Luke; how do you prove that?

Sir Luke. By constant experience.—You must have seen the man who makes and uses pens without hands.

Serj. I have.

Sir Luke. And not a twelvemonth ago, I lost my way in a fog, at Mile-End, and was conducted to my house in May-Fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

Serj. Wonderful!

Sir Luke. And as to hearing and speaking, those organs are of no manner of use in the world.

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family, dumb as oysters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

Serj. Why, Charlot, these are cases in point.

Sir Luke. Oh! clear as a trout-stream; and it is not only, my little Charlot, that this piece of timber answers every purpose, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

Serj.

Serj. Ay!

Sir Luke. Why, it was but last summer, at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole season by a bullet-headed Swiss from the canton of Bern, who was always boasting, what, and how much he dared do; and then, as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes, held it in more contempt.—By gods, he vas no more minds it dan nothings at all—So foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

Serj. As how!—Mind, Charlot.

Sir Luke. Why to drive a corkin pin into the calves of our legs.

Serj. Well, well.

Sir Luke. Mine, you may imagine, was easily done—but when it came to the Baron—

Serj. Ay, ay.

Sir Luke. Our modern Cato soon lost his coolness and courage, screw'd his nose up to his foretop, rapp'd out a dozen oaths in high Dutch, limp'd away to his lodgings, and there was laid up for a month—Ha! ha!

Enter a Servant, and delivers a Card to Sir Luke.

Sir Luke [reads.] “Sir Gregory Goose desires the honour of Sir Luke Limp’s company to dine. An answer is desired.” Gadso! a little unlucky; I have been engag’d for these three weeks.

Serj. What, I find Sir Gregory is return’d for the corporation of *Fleesum*.

Sir Luke. Is he so? Oh ho!—That alters the case.—George, give my compliments to Sir Gregory, and I’ll certainly come and dine there. Order Joe to run to Alderman Inkle’s, in Threadneedle-street; sorry can’t wait upon him, but confin’d to bed two days with *new influenza*.

Char. You make light, Sir Luke, of these sort of engagements.

Sir Luke. What can a man do? These damn’d fellows (when one has the misfortune to meet them) take scandalous advantage; tease, When will you do me the honour, pray, Sir Luke, to take a bit of mutton with me? Do you name the day.—They are as bad as a beggar,

beggar, who attacks your coach at the mounting of a hill; there is no getting rid of them, without a penny to one, and a promise to t'other.

Serj. True; and then for such a time too—three weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remember. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term for the summer assizes.

Sir Luke. Not but, upon these occasions, no man in England is more punctual than——

Enter a Servant, who gives Sir Luke a Letter.

From whom?

Serv. Earl of Brentford. The servant waits for an answer.

Sir Luke. Answer!—By your leave, Mr. Serjeant and Charlot. [*Reads.*] “Taste for music—Monf. Duport—fail—Dinner upon the table at five”—Gadso! I hope Sir Gregory’s servant an’t gone.

Serv. Immediately upon receiving the answer.

Sir Luke. Run after him as fast as you can—tell him, quite in despair—recollect an engagement that can’t in nature be missed,—and return in an instant.

Char. You see, Sir, the Knight must give way for my Lord.

Sir Luke. No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlot; you saw that was quite an extempore business.—No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but to tell you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his house.

Char. By the choice of his company he gives an unanswerable instance of that.

Sir Luke. You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit: You know Brentford’s finances are a little out of repair, which procures him some visits that he would very gladly excuse.

Serj. What need he fear? His person is sacred; for by the tenth of William and Mary—

Sir Luke. He knows that well enough; but for all that—

Serj. Indeed, by a late act of his own house, (which

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does them infinite honour) his goods or chattels may be——

Sir Luke. Seiz'd upon when they can find them; but he lives in ready-furnish'd lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

Serj. Nay, if the sheriff return “non inventus”——

Sir Luke. A pox o'your law, you make me lose sight of my story. One morning, a Welch coachmaker came with his bill to my Lord, whose name was unluckily Loyd. My Lord had the man up. You are call'd, I think, Mr. Loyd?—At your Lordship's service, my Lord.——What, Loyd with an L?—It was with an L indeed, my Lord.—Because in your part of the world I have heard that Loyd and Floyd were synonymous, the very same names.—Very often indeed, my lord.—But you always spell your's with an L?—Always.—That, Mr. Loyd, is a little unlucky; for you must know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L.—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. There was no overtaking the servant.

Sir Luke. That is unlucky: tell my Lord i'll attend him.—I'll call on Sir Gregory myself.

Serj. Why, you won't leave us, Sir Luke?

Sir Luke. Pardon, dear Serjeant and Charlotta; have a thousand things to do for half a million of people positively; promised to procure a husband for Lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horse for Brigadier Whip; and after, must run into the city to borrow a thousand for young At-all at Almack's; send a Cheshire cheese by the stage to Sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get at the Herald's Office a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arriv'd: so you see I have not a moment to lose.

Serj. True, true.

Sir Luke. At your toilet to-morrow at ten you may——

Enter a Servant abruptly, and runs against Sir Luke.

Can't you see where you are running, you rascal!

Serv. Sir, his grace the Duke of—

Sir Luke. Grace!—Where is he?—Where—

Serv. In his coach at the door.—If you an't better engaged would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Dolly's.

Sir Luke. In his own coach do you say?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Sir Luke. With the coronets—or—

Serv. I believe so.

Sir Luke. There's no resisting of that.—Bid Joe run to Sir Gregory Goose's.

Serv. He is already gone to Alderman Inkle's.

Sir Luke. Then do you step to the Knight—hey!—no—you must go to my Lord's—hold, hold, no—I have it—Step first at Sir Greg's, then pop in at Lord Brentford's just as the company are going to dinner.

Serv. What shall I say to Sir Gregory?

Sir Luke. Any thing—what I told you before.

Serv. And what to my Lord?

Sir Luke. What!—Why tell him that my uncle from Epsom—no—that won't do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—Why tell him—hold I have it—Tell him, that as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arrested by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney coach, and carried to the Py'd Bull in the Borough; I beg ten thousand pardons for making his grace wait, but his grace knows my misfor—

[*Exit Sir Luke.*]

Char. Well, Sir, what dy'e think of the proofs? I flatter myself I have pretty well established my case.

Serj. Why, hussy, you have hit upon points; but then they are trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title, that stands unimpeach'd; and—But, madam, your mother.

Enter Mrs. Circuit.

Mrs. Cir. What have you done with the Knight?—Why you have not let him depart?

Char.

Char. It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs. Cir. I don't wonder at that ; but what took him away ?

Char. What will at any time take him away—a Duke at the door.

Mrs. Cir. Are you certain of that ?

Serj. Why truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man that is just going to be marry'd.

Mrs. Cir. The prospect of marriage does not always prove the strongest attachment.

Serj. Pardon me, lovee ; the law allows no higher consideration than marriage.

Mrs. Cir. Pshaw !

Serj. Infomuch, that if Duke A was to intermarry with chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the settlement.

Mrs. Cir. Indeed !

Serj. Ay ; and this was held to be law by Chief baron Bind'em, on the famous case of the Marquis of Cully, and Fanny Flip-flap the French dancer.

Mrs. Cir. The greater blockhead the Baron : but don't pester me with your odious law cases.—Did not you tell me you was to go Kingston to day to try the crown causes ?

Serj. I was begg'd to attend for fear his Lordship should not be able to sit ; but if it proves inconvenient to you—

Mrs. Cir. To me ! Oh, by no means in the world ; I am too good a subject to desire the least delay in the law's execution : and when d'ye set out ?

Serj. Between one and two ; I shall only just give a law lecture to Jack.

Mrs. Cir. Lord ! I wonder Mr. Circuit you would breed that boy up to the bar.

Serj. Why not, chuck ? He has fine steady parts, and for his time moots a point—

Mrs. Cir. Steady ! stupid you mean : nothing sure cou'd add to his heaviness but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him in the army.

Serj. Nay, chuck, if you choose it, I believe I have interest to get Jack a commission.

Mrs. Cir. Why, Mr. Circuit, you know he is no son of mine ; perhaps a cockade may animate the lad with some fire.

Serj. True, lovee ; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiss to restrain his fire a little.

Mrs. Cir. I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding that way.

Serj. Charlot, send thither your brother,

[*Exit Charlot.*]

Mrs. Cir. I'll not interrupt you.

Serj. Far from it, lovee ; I should be glad to have you a witness of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs. Cir. Of that I am no judge ; besides, I am full of business to day—There is to be a ballot at one for the *Ladies' Club* lately established, and lady Bab Basso has proposed me for a member.—Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my Lord Loo ?

Serj. The three hundred you mean ?

Mrs. Cir. And besides, there is my debt to Kitty Cribbidge ; I protest I almost blush whenever I meet them.

Serj. Why really, lovee, 'tis a large sum of money.—Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this business.

Mrs. Cir. I don't understand you.

Serj. Bring an action against them on the statute, in the name of my clerk ; and so not only rescue the debt from their hands, but recover likewise considerable damages.

Mrs. A pretty conceit, Mr. Serjeant ! but does it not occur to your wisdom, that as I have (by the help of Captain Cog) been oftener a winner than loser, the tables may be turned upon us ?

Serj. No, no, chuck, that did not escape me ; I have provided for that.—Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable ; so that, lovee, we shall be able to fleece your friends not only of that they have won of poor deeree, but likewise for what they have lost.

Mrs. Cir. Why, what a paltry, pettifogging puppy art thou !—And could you suppose that I would submit to the scandalous office ?

Serj.

Serj. Scandalous! I don't understand this strange perversion of words. The scandal lies in *breaking the laws*, not in bringing the offenders to *justice*.

Mrs. Cir. Mean-spirited wretch!—What, do you suppose that those laws could be levell'd against people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any set of men would submit to lay legal restraints on *themselves*?—Absurd and preposterous!

Serj. Why, by their public practice, my love, one would suspect that they thought themselves excepted by a particular clause.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! to be sure; not the least doubt can be made.

Serj. True, chuck—But then your great friends should never complain of highwaymen stopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houses.

Mrs. Cir. Why, what has that to do with the business?

Serj. Oh! the natural consequence, love; for whilst the superiors are throwing away their fortunes, and consequently their independence *above*—you don't think but their domestics are following their examples *below*.

Mrs. Cir. Well, and what then?

Serj. Then! the same distress that throws the master and mistress into the power of any who are willing to purchase them, by a regular gradation, seduces the servants to actions, though more *criminal*, perhaps not more *atrocious*.

Mrs. Cir. Pshaw! stuff!—I have no head to examine your dirty distinctions—Don't teize me with your jargon—I have told you the sums I shall want, so take care they are ready at your return from Kingston.—Nay, don't hesitate; recollect your own state of the case, and remember. my honour is in pawn, and must some way or other be redeem'd by the end of the week. [Exit.]

Serj. solus. My honour is in pawn!—Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words!—Formerly, *chastity* was the honour of woman, and *good faith* and *integrity* the honour of men: but *now*, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her losses at play, and a gentleman who kills his best friend in some

trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-top people of honour. Well, let them go on, it brings grist to our mill: for whilst both the sexes stick firm to their honour, we shall never want business, either at Doctor's Commons, or the Old Bailey. *[Exit.]*

End of the FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

Enter Serjeant Circuit and Jack.

Serjeant.

JACK, let Will bring the chaise to the door.

Jack. Mr. Fairplay, Sir, the attorney, begs to speak a few words.

Ser. How often have I told you, that I will see none of those sort of folks but at chambers; you know how angry your mother is at their rapping, and littering the house.

Jack. He says, Sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

Serj. Well, bid him walk in.

Enter Fairplay.

Well, Mr. Fairplay, what's your will?

Fair. I just call'd, Mr. Serjeant, to know your opinion upon the case of young Woodford, and if you like the proposal of being concern'd.

Serj. If it turns out as you state it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Essex estate may without doubt be recover'd; and so may the lands in the North.

Fair. We have full proofs to that fact.

Serj. May be so; but really Mr. Fairplay, you know the length of time that these kind of suits—

Fair.

Fair. True Sir, but then your experience will shorten I apprehend—

Serj. That's more than I know: and then not only my fees lying dormant, but, perhaps, an expectation of money advanc'd.

Fair. The property, Sir, is of very great value, and, upon the recovery, any acknowledgment shall be readily made.

Serj. There again, *any*! do you know that in law, that word *any* has no meaning at all? Besides, when people are in distress, they are lavish enough of their offers; but when their business is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

Fair. You have only to dictate your terms.

Serj. Does the lad live in town?

Fair. He has been under my care since the death of his father; I have given him as good an education as my narrow fortune would let me; he is now studying the law in the Temple, in hopes that should he fail of other assistance, he may be able one day to do *himself* justice.

Serj. In the Temple?

Fair. Yes, Sir, in those little chambers just over your head—I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

Jack. Who? Mr. Woodford! Lord as well as myself, he is a sweet sober youth, and will one day make a vast figure, I am sure.

Serj. Indeed!

Jack. I am positive, Sir, if you were to hear him speak at the Robinhood in the Butcher-row, you would say so yourself: why he is now reckon'd the third; except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawney Sinclair the snuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him,

Serj. Peace, puppy; well Mr. Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me and—pray who is employ'd against you?

Fair. A city attorney, one Sheepskin.

Serj. A cunning fellow, I know him; well; Sir, if you will call at Pump-court in a week.

Fair. I shall attend you.

Serj. Jack, open the door for Mr.—[*Exeunt Fair-play and Jack.*] Something may be made of this matter: I'll see this Sheepskin myself. So much in future for carrying on the suit, or so much in hand to make it miscarry: a wise man should well weigh which party to take for.

Enter Jack.

So, Jack, any body, at chambers to day?

Jack. Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape against Will Vizard, this term.

Serj. Praying for an equal partition of plunder?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Serj. Strange world we live in, that even highway-men can't be true to each other! [*half aside to himself.*] but we shall make master Vizard refund, we'll shew him what long hands the law has.

Jack. Facias says, that in all the books he can't hit on a precedent.

Serj. Then I'll make one myself; *aut inveniam, aut faciam*, has been always my motto. The charge must be made for partnership-profit, by bartering lead and gunpowder, against money, watches, and rings, on Epping-forest, Hounslow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

Jack. He says, if the court should get scent of the scheme, the parties would all stand committed.

Serj. Cowardly rascal! but however, the caution mayn't prove amiss. [*Aside.*] I'll not put my own name to the bill.

Jack. The declaration too is deliver'd in the cause of Roger Rapp'em against Sir Solomon Simple.

Serj. What, the affair of the note?

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Why he is clear that his client never gave such a note.

Jack. Defendant never saw Plaintiff since the hour he was born; but, notwithstanding they have three witnessess to prove a consideration, and signing the note.

Serj. They have?

Jack. He is puzzled what plea to put in.

Serj. Three witnesses ready, you say?

Jack.

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Jack. Yes.

Serj. Tell him Simple must acknowledge the note, [Jack starts] and bid him, against the trial comes on, to procure *four* persons at least to prove the payment, at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

Jack. But then how comes the note to remain in Plaintiff's possession?

Serj. Well put, Jack; but we have a *salvo* for that; Plaintiff happened not to have the note in his pocket, but promis'd to deliver it up, when call'd thereunto by Defendant.

Jack. That will do rarely.

Serj. Let the defence be a secret, for I see we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to lose time, have you carefully conn'd those instructions I gave you?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Serj. Well, that we shall see. How many points are the great object of practice?

Jack. Two.

Serj. Which are they?

Jack. The first is to put a man into possession of what is his right.

Serj. The second?

Jack. Either to deprive a man of what is *really* his right, or to keep him as long as possible *out* of possession.

Serj. Good boy! To gain the last end, what are the best means to be us'd?

Jack. Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

Serj. Name them?

Jack. Injunctions, demurrers, sham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, rebutters, sur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, essoigns, and imparlance.

Serj. [To himself.] Fine instruments in the hands of a man, who knows how to use them.—But now, Jack, we come to the point: if an able advocate has his choice in a cause, (which if he is in reputation he may readily have,) which side should he choose, the right, or the wrong?

Jack. A great lawyer's business, is always to make choice of the wrong.

Serj. And prythee why so?

Jack. Because a good cause can speak for itself, whilst a bad one demands an able counsellor to give it a colour.

Serj. Very well. But in what respects will this answer to the lawyer himself?

Jack. In a two-fold way; firstly, his fees will be large in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

Serj. Secondly?—

Jack. His reputation will rise, by obtaining the victory in a desperate cause.

Serj. Right, boy.—Are you ready in the case of the cow?

Jack. Pretty well, I believe.

Serj. Give it then.

Jack. First of April, anno seventeen hundred and blank, John a Nokes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for stealing a cow, contra pacem etcet.—and against the statute in that case provided and made, to prevent stealing of cattle.

Serj. Go on.

Jack. Said Nokes was convicted upon the said statute.

Serj. What follow'd upon?—

Jack. Motion in arrest of judgment, made by counsellor Puzzle. First, Because the field from whence the cow was convey'd, is laid in the indictment as round, but turn'd out upon proof to be square.

Serj. That's well: a valid objection.

Jack. Secondly, Because in said indictment the colour of the cow is called red, there being no such things in rerum natura as red cows, no more than black lions, spread eagles, flying giffins, or blue boars.

Serj. Well put.

Jack. Thirdly, Said Nokes has not offended against form of the statute; because stealing of *cattle* is there provided against: whereas we are only convicted of stealing a *cow*. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that cows must be cattle.

Serj. Bravo, bravo! buss me, you rogue; you are your father's own son! go on, and prosper.—I am sorry,

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ry, dear Jack, I must leave thee. If Providence but sends thee life and health, I prophesy, thou wilt wrest as much land from the owners, and save as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner since the days of king Alfred.

Jack. I'll do my endeavour. *[Exit Serjeant.]*
So!---father is set off. Now if I can but lay eyes on our Charlot, just to deliver this letter, before madam comes home. There she is.---Hist, sister Charlot!

Enter Charlot.

Char. What have you got there, Jack?

Jack. something for you, sister.

Char. For me! Prythee what is it?

Jack. A thing.

Char. What thing?

Jack. A thing that will please you I'm sure.

Char. Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. *[Jack gives the letter.]* How's this! a letter! from whom?

Jack. Can't you guess?

Char. Not I; I don't know the hand.

Jack. May be not; but you know the inditer.

Char. Then tell me his name.

Jack. Break open the seal, and you'll find it.

Char. *[Opening the letter]* "Charles Woodford!"---I am sure I know nothing of him.

Jack. Ay, but sister you do.

Char. How! when, and where?

Jack. Don't you remember about three weeks ago, when you drank tea at our chambers, there was a young gentleman in a blue sattin waistcoat, who wore his own head of hair?

Char. Well?

Jack. That letter's from he.

Char. What can be his business with me?

Jack. Read that and you'll know.

Char. *[Reads.]* "Want words to apologize---hum---
"very first moment I saw you---hum, hum---smother'd
"long in my breast---hum, hum---happiest, or else the
most wretched of men."---So, Sir, you have under-
taken

taken a pretty commission ! and what do you think my father will—

Jack. Why, I hope you won't go for to tell him.

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I shall.

Jack. No, sister, I'm sure you won't be so cross. Besides, what could I do ? The poor young lad begg'd so hard ; and there for this fortnight he has gone about sighing and musing, and moping ; I am satisfied it would melt you to see him. Do, sister, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

Char. Upon my word !—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent ; you are for pushing matters at once.—But harkee, Sir, who is this spark you are so anxious about ? And how long have you known him ?

Jack. Oh ! a prodigious long while : above a month I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel ? I assure you he is vastly lik'd by the ladies.

Char. He is.

Jack. Yes, indeed. Mrs. Congo, at the Grecian coffee-house, says, he's the soberest youth that comes to the house ; and all Mrs. Mittens's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the widow every time he goes by.

Char. Upon my word !

Jack. And moreover, besides that, he has several great estates in the country ; but only for the present, he is kept out of 'em all by the owners.

Char. Ah, Jack ! that's the worst part of the story.

Jack. Pshaw ! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr. Fairplay, has been with father to-day, and says, he is certain that he can set all to rights in a trice.

Char. Well, Jack, when that point is determin'd, it will be time enough to—

Jack. Then ! Lord of mercy ! why, sister Charlot, it is my private opinion that if you don't give him some crumbs of comfort, he won't live till Midsummer term.

Char. I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately depriv'd of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. However, Jack, you may tell your

your friend, that I have observ'd his frequent walks in our street.

Jack. Walks! Why one should think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman; for no sooner one is off, but the other comes on.

Char. And that from his eyes being constantly fixed on my window (for the information of which, I presume he is indebted to you.)——

Jack. He! he! he!

Char. I had a pretty shrewd guess at his business; but tell him that unless my fa———Hush! our tyrant is return'd. Don't leave the house till I see you.

Enter Mrs. Circuit and Betty.

Mrs. Cir. So, Sir, what makes you loitering from chambers? I thought I told you, you should never be here but at meals? [*Exit Jack.*] One spy is enough in a family.—Miss, you may go to your room; and d'ye hear—I shall have company, so you need not come down. [*Exit Charlot.*]—Betty, no message or letter?

Betty. None, Madam.

Mrs. Cir. That is amazing!—You know I expect Colonel Secret and Mrs. Simper every instant.

Betty. Yes, Madam.

Mrs. Cir. Put the fruit and the wine on the table in the next room.

Betty. Very well, Madam.

Mrs. Cir. And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but Sir Luke.

Betty. Madam, I shall take care.

[*Exit.*

Mrs. Cir. (sits down) The ballot must be over by this time. Sure there is nothing so dreadful as a state of suspense: but should they black-ball me!—No, there's no danger of that; miss Mattadore has insur'd me success.—Well, this is certainly one of the most useful institutions; it positively supplies the only point of time one does not know how to employ. From twelve, the hour of one's rising, to dinner, is a most horrible chasm; for though teizing the mercers and milliners by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amuse-

amusement, yet upon repetition it palls.—But every morning to be sure of a party, and then again at night after a rout, to have a place to retire to ; to be quite freed from all pain of providing ; not to be pester'd at table with the odious company of clients, and country cousins ; for I am determin'd to dine, and sup at the club, every day. I can tell 'em, they'll have but few forfeits from me.

Enter Betty, in haste, with a letter.

Betty. By a chairman, Madam, from the Thatch'd House.

Mrs. Cir. Give it me, Betty, this instant ;—ay—this is Mattadore's hand. [*opens and reads the letter.*] “ My dear Circuit—it is with the utmost concern, and confusion, I find myself oblig'd to acquaint you, that notwithstanding all the pains I have taken, the club have thought fit to reject.”—Oh ! [*she faints.*]

Betty. Bless my soul ! my lady is gone !—John ! Will ! Kitty ! run hither this instant.—

Enter two Maids and a man Servant.

All. What, what's the matter ?

Betty. Quick ! quick ! some hartshorn and water— [*pats her hand.*] Madam ! madam—

Serv. Here ! here ! here ! [*bringing water*]

Betty. John, go for the potter-carrier this instant— I believe to my soul she is dead—Kitty, fetch some feathers to burn under her nose ;—there, stand further off, and give her some air—

Enter Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Hey day ! what the deuce is the matter ? what's the meaning of all this, Mrs. Betty ?

Betty. Oh ! Sir, is it you—my poor lady [*cries*] clap the bottle hard to her nose.

Sir Luke. But how came it about ?

Betty.

Betty. Some of the *continents* of that curs'd letter she has there in her hand.

Sir Luke. Here, here, take some of my eau de luce. [offering a bottle.]

Betty. There! she recovers a little—some water—I believe it is nothing but a *satirical* fit, I have had them myself—now she opens her eyes—so, so—bend her forward a little.

Sir Luke. My sweet Mrs. Circuit.

Mrs. Cir. Who is that?

Betty. Nobody at all madam, but only Sir Luke.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! Sir Luke, such a stroke, so fatal, so sudden, it is not in nature, I should ever survive it.

Sir Luke. Marry heaven forbid! but what cause—could—

Mrs. Cir. Leave the room. [To the servants, who go out.] Only, look over that letter.

Sir Luke. Hum, hum,—[reads.] “fit to reject you—this—

Mrs. Cir. There! there! there!

Sir Luke. I own this is the utmost malice of fortune—but let me finish the letter.—“This calamity, dear “Circuit, is of such a nature as baffles all advice, or “interposition of friends, I shall therefore leave you “to time, and your own good understanding.” [pretty and sensible.]—“yours,” &c.—But let us see, what says the postscript—[reads.] “Perhaps it may give you “some comfort to know that you had sixteen almonds, “and but two raisins against you.

Mrs. Cir. But two!

Sir Luke. No more.

Mrs. Cir. This must be Kitty Cribbage's doing, she has been tattling about the paltry trifle I owe her.

Sir Luke. Not unlikely: but come, bear up, my dear madam, and consider that *two*—

Mrs. Cir. Is as bad as two thousand.

Sir Luke. Granted; but perhaps it mayn't be too late to repair.—Gadso! I have thought of a scheme—I'll be elected myself, and then I warrant we manage—

Mrs. Cir. You, Sir Luke? that never can be.

Sir

Sir Luke. No, Madam, and why not?—why you don't suppose that they wou'd venture to——

Mrs. Cir. It would not only be against the spirit, but the very letter of their constitution to chuse you a member.

Sir Luke. Ay, Madam, how so?

Mrs. Cir. Their statutes are selected from all the codes that ever existed from the days of Lycurgus to the present Czarina.

Sir Luke. Well.

Mrs. Cir. The law that relates to your case they have borrow'd from the Roman religion.

Sir Luke. As how?

Mrs. Cir. As no man be admitted a monk, who has least corporal spot, or defect; so, no candidate can be receiv'd as a member who is depriv'd of the use of his limbs.

Sir Luke. Nay, then indeed I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs. Cir. Indeed, the Serjeant says, if the club could be induc'd to *resolve* in your favour, then the *original law* would signify nothing.

Sir Luke. Well, well, we'll see what can be done. [*A loud knocking.*] But hush! the company's come; collect yourself, sweet Mrs. Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious pleasure of seeing how this disappointment affects you.

Mrs. Cir. Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter Colonel Secret and Mrs. Simper.

Mrs. Sim. Your servant, Sir Luke; my dear Circuit, I am frighten'd to death—your people tell me, you are but just recover'd from a—

Mrs. Cir. Oh! nothing at all! a faintness, a kind of swimming—but those people are ever swelling mole hills to mountains.

Mrs. Sim. I protest I was afraid that you had suffer'd your late disappointment to lay hold of your spirits.

Mrs. Cir. What disappointment, my dear?

Col.

Col. Mrs. Simper hints at the little mistake made this morning at the Thatch'd House.

Mrs. Cir. That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child—all my own doing.

Mrs. Sim. How!

Sir Luke. Entirely.

Mrs. Cir. Oh! I always detested the thoughts of the thing;—they would put me up, let me say what I would, so I was reduc'd to the necessity of prevailing upon two of my friends to *black ball* me.

Mrs. Sim. That, indeed, alters the case.

Col. I am vastly happy to hear it: your old acquaintance were afraid they should lose you.

Mrs. Cir. It is a sign they know but little of me—but come, my good folks, I have prepared a small collation in the next room, will you— [Exeunt.]

Enter Jack and Woodford.

Jack. I'll watch sister, to see that nobody comes; now Woodford make good use of your time. [Exit Woodford.] There, I have left 'em together; if I had staid, I don't believe they would have open'd their mouths for a month: I never saw such an alteration in a lad since the day I was born.—Why, if I had not known him before, I should not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb:

True lovers are shy,
When people are by.

I'll take a peep to see how they go on:—there they are, just in the same posture I left them; she folding her fingers, and he twirling his hat; why they don't even look at each other: was there ever such a couple of—stay, stay, now he opens his mouth—pshaw!—lord! there he shuts it again—hush! I hear somebody coming—no—nothing at all:—mother is safe I am sure,—there is no danger from her—now let us take t'other— [peeps at the door.] hum!—gadso, matters are mightily amended—there! there! very well—there he lays down the

the law—now he claps his hand on his heart—vastly pretty, I vow—there he swops with both his knees on the ground—charming!—and squeezes his hat with both hands, like one of the actors—delightful! she wants him to rise, and he won't—prodigious moving indeed!

Enter Betty.

Betty. So Sir, what are you doing there?

Jack. There? where?

Betty. With your eyes glew'd close to the keyhole.

Jack. I wanted to speak a word to my sister.

Betty. Then why don't you open her door?

Jack. I did not know but she might be saying her prayers.

Betty. Prayers! a likely story! Who says their prayers at this time of the day?—No, no, that won't pass upon me.—Let me look—very pretty! So, so, I see there's somebody else at his prayers too—fine doings!—As soon as the company goes, I shall take care to inform Madam your mother.

Jack. Nay, but Mrs. Betty, you won't be so—

Betty. Indeed, Mr. John, but I shall—I'll swallow none of your secrets, believe me.

Jack. What, perhaps your stomach is overloaded already.

Betty. No matter for that, I shall be even with Miss for telling Master about and concerning my drums.

Jack. Why, Mrs. Betty, surely sister could not—

Betty. When she very well knows that I have not sent cards but twice the whole season.

Jack. Lord! what signi—

Betty. What would she say, if she visited the great families I do? For tho' I am as I may say but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman, has a more prettier set of acquaintance,

Jack. Well but—

Betty. My routs indeed!—There is Mrs. Allspice, who lives with lady Cicily Sequence, has six tables every Sunday, besides loozers, and braggars; and moreover
proposes

proposes giving a masquerade, the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

Jack. Well, but to talk calmly.

Betty. And as Miss is so fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourselves, as the quality have: the *Distrustful Mother*, 'tis call'd---Pylades, by Mr. Thomas, Lord Catastrophe's butler—Hermione, Mrs. Allspice; and I shall do Andromache myself.

Jack. A play! lord, Miss Betty, will you give me a ticket?

Betty. All's one for that—and so you may tell Miss that—[*bell rings*] coming, Madam, this minute—and that, Mr. John, is the long and the short on't.

[*Bell rings again*] Lord, I am coming— [Exit.]

Enter Woodford to Jack.

Wood. What's the matter?

Jack. Here, Betty, my mother's fac totum, has just discover'd your haunts; and is gone to lay an information against you—so depend upon it, a search warrant will issue directly.

Wood. Stay but a moment, till I take leave of your sister.

Jack. Zooks! I tell you the constables will be here in a trice, so you have not a moment to lose.

Wood. How unlucky this is!

Jack. But I hope you have obtain'd a verdict however.

Wood. No.

Jack. No!

Wood. It would not have been decent, to have press'd the judge too soon for a sentence.

Jack. Soon!—You are a ninny, I tell you so:—here you will suffer judgment to go by default.—You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

Wood. This you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity case; I have but just fil'd my bill; one must give the parties time to put in an answer.

Jack

Jack. Time!—How you may come off in court I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber counsel I fear.—Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure another hearing before it is—but lord o'mercy! there is father crossing the hall—should he see us all's over—we have nothing for it but taking shelter with sister. [Exeunt.]

A C T III.

Sir Luke Limp, Mrs. Circuit Colonel Secret, and Mrs. Simper, discover'd at a table, with a collation before them.

Mrs. Circuit.

OH! by the bye, Sir Luke—take some of these sweetmeats, my dear [*to Mrs. Simper*].—did not you promise to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera?—Colonel, won't you taste the champagne?

Sir Luke. Who, Signior Piano?—Let me assist Mrs. Simper.—Why, Madam, I made an attempt; but at present—shan't I send you a biscuit?—he is in the possession of a certain lady, who never suffers him out of her sight for a moment.

Mrs. Sim. Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vastly fond of these custards.

Sir Luke. Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but he promis'd, if possible, to escape for an hour—won't you? [*to Mrs. Circuit.*]

Mrs. Cir. No, it gives me the heart-burn.—Then let us leave him a cover.

Col. By all means in the world.

Mrs. Cir. But there is, likewise, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs. Sim. Another! Who can that be I wonder?

Mrs. Cir. A small appendix of mine.

Sir Luke. How, Madam!

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Mrs. Cir. You need not be jealous, Sir Luke—taste that tart, Mrs. Simper—it is only my husband the Serjeant.—Ha! ha! ha!—Betty makes them herself.

Mrs. Sim. Oh! you abominable creature! How could such a thought come into your head?

Sir Luke. Ma'am—[*Offering sweetmeats to Mrs. Sim.*]

Mrs. Sim. Not a bit more, I thank you.—I swear and vow I should swoon at the sight.

Mrs. Cir. And I should receive him with the polite indifference of an absolute stranger.

Sir Luke. Well said, my good lady Intrepid! But, notwithstanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you such an electrical shock.—

Mrs. Cir. You are vastly deceiv'd.

Sir Luke. Dare you come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr. Serjeant? He is not far off.

Mrs. Cir. What, my husband?

Sir Luke. Even he! I saw him as I enter'd the hall.

Mrs. Cir. Impossible!

Sir Luke. Nay, then I must fetch him. [*Exit Sir Luke.*]

Col. I can't conceive what the knight wou'd be at.

Mrs. Sim. Why he is mad.

Mrs. Cir. Or turn'd fool.

Enter Sir Luke, with the Serjeant's peruke on a block.

Sir Luke. Now, Madam, have I reason? Is this your husband or not?

Mrs. Sim. It is he; not the least doubt can be made.

Col. Yes, yes, it is the Serjeant himself.

Mrs. Cir. I own it; I acknowledge the lord of my wishes. [*Kisses the block.*]

Mrs. Sim. All his features are there!

Col. The grave cast of his countenance!

Sir Luke. the vacant stare of his eye!

Mrs. Cir. The livid hue of his lips!

Mrs. Sim. The rubies with which his cheeks are enrich'd!

Col. The silent solemnity when he sits on the bench!

Mrs. Cir.

Mrs. Cir. We must have him at table; but pray good folks let my husband appear like himself.—I'll run for the gown. [Exit.

Mrs. Sim. By all means in the world.

Sir Luke. Dispatch, I beseech you.

Mrs. Circuit returns with a gown and band.

Mrs. Cir. Sir Luke, lend your assistance.

Col. There, place him at the head of the table.

[*They fix the head at the back of a chair, and place it at table; then all sit.*

Mrs. Sim. Madam, you'll take care of your husband.

Mrs. Cir. I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs. Sim. Oh, Madam! I know that very well.

Sir Luke. Come, Hob or Nob, Master Circuit—let us try if we can't fuddle the Serjeant.

Col. O! fy! have a proper respect for the coif.

Mrs. Sim. Don't be too facetious, Sir Luke: it is not quite so safe to sport with the heads of the law; you don't know how soon you may have a little business together.

Sir Luke. But come, the Serjeant is sulky.—I have thought of a way to divert him:—You know he is never so happy as when he is hearing a cause; suppose we were to plead one before him; Mrs. Circuit and I to be counsel, the Colonel the clerk, and Mrs. Simper the cryer.

Mrs. Cir. The finest thought in the world! And stay, to conduct the trial with proper solemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe; we shall there be able to equip ourselves with suitable dresses.

Sir Luke. Alons! alons!

Mrs. Sim. There is no time to be lost. [All rise.

Mrs. Cir. [Stopping short as they are going out.] But won't my husband be angry, if we leave him alone? Bye, dearee—we shall soon return to thee again.

[Exeunt.

Enter

Enter Serjeant Circuit, not perceiving the collation.

Serj. So my lord not being able to sit, there was no occasion for me.—I can't put that girl's nonsense out of my head—My wife is young to be sure, and loves pleasure I own; but as to the main article, I have not the least ground to suspect her in that—No, no!—And then Sir Luke! my *proche ami*, the dearest friend I have in the—Heyday! [*seeing the collation*] What the deuce have we here?—A collation!—So, so—I see madam knows how to divert herself during my absence.—What's this? [*seeing the block*] Oh, ho! ha! ha! ha!—Well, that's pretty enough I protest.—Poor girl, I see she could not be happy without having something at table that resembled me.—How pleas'd she will be to find me here in *propiâ personâ*.—By your leave, Mrs. Circuit—[*sits down and eats*] Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine [*drinks*]—Champaign as I live—must have t'other glass—They little think how that gentleman there regales himself in their absence—Ha! ha! ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me—Come, brother Coif, here's your health—[*drinks*]—I must pledge myself I believe—[*drinks again*]—devilish strong—pshut!—Somebody's coming—[*gets up and goes towards the wings*]—What do I see? Four lawyers! What the devil can be the meaning of this? I should be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! By your leave, brother Serjeant—I must crave the use of your robe—[*sits down, and gets under the gown*]—Between ourselves, this is not the first time this gown has cover'd a fraud.

Enter Sir Luke, Colonel, Mrs. Circuit, and Mrs. Simper, dressed as counsellors.

Sir Luke. Come, come, gentlemen, dispatch, the court has been waiting for some time. Brother Circuit, you have look'd over your brief?

Mrs. Cir. What, do you suppose, Sir, that like some of our brethren I defer that till I come into court? No, no.

Sir Luke

Sir Luke. This cause contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs. Cir. One should think, Sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir Luke. Child, I was some years in the Temple; but the death of my brother robb'd the robe of my labours.

Mrs. Sim. What a loss to the public!

Sir Luke. You are finart, Mrs. Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Shuffle, whose manner I study'd, pronounc'd me a promising youth.

Mrs. Sim. I don't doubt it.

Sir Luke. But let us to business. And first, for the state of the case: The parties you know are Hobson and Nobson; the object of litigation is a small parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs. Cir. True; call'd Turnbury Mead.

Sir Luke. Very well. Then to bring matters to a short issue, it was agreed, that Nobson should on the premises cut down a tree, and Hobson bring his action of damage.

Mrs. Cir. True, true.

Sir Luke. The jury being sworn, and the counsellors feed, the court may proceed—Take your seats---But hold---I hope no gentleman has been touch'd on both sides.

All. Oh! fye!

Sir Luke. Let silence be call'd.

Mrs. Sim. Silence in the court!

Sir Luke. But stop. To be regular, and provide for fresh causes, we must take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but stick fast to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

All. True, true.

Sir Luke. Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs. Cir. Gentlemen of the Jury.---I am in this cause counsel for Hobson, the plaintiff.---The action is brought against Nebuchadonezer Nobson, That he the said Nobson did cut down a tree, value two-pence, and to his own use said tree did convert.---Nobson justifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, first state the

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the probable evidence, and then come to the positive ; and first as to the probable.---When was this tree here belonging to Hobson, and claim'd by Nobson, cut down ? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the sun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on ?---No ; it was cut down privately, in the night, in a dark night, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see.---Hum---And then with respect and regard to this tree, I am instructed to say, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the spot where it grew. Now can it be thought that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree ?---Certainly no.---And again, gentlemen, we moreover insist, that this tree was not only ornamental to the spot where it grew, but it was a useful tree to the owner ; it was a plum-tree, and not only a plum-tree, but I am authoriz'd to say the best of plum-trees, it was a damson plum.---Now can it be thought, that any man wou'd come for to go, in the middle of the night, nobody seeing, nobody *did* see, nobody *could* see, and cut down a tree ; which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a useful tree ; and not only a useful tree, but a plum tree ; and not only a plum-tree, but the best of plum-trees, a damson-plum ? Most assuredly no.---If so be then, that this be so, and it most certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full costs of suits, in such a manner and so forth, as may nevertheless appear notwithstanding.

Sir Luke. Have you done, Mr. Serjeant ?

Mrs. Cir. You may proceed.

Sir Luke. Gentlemen of the jury---I am in this cause counsel for Hob---Zouns ! I think the head moves.

All. Hey !

Col. No, no, Mrs. Simper jogg'd the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir Luke. For Hercules Hobson---(I cou'd have sworn it had stir'd)---I sha'nt, gentlemen, upon this occasion, attempt to move your passions, by flowing periods, and

rhetorical flowers, as Mr. Serjeant has done ; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way thro' your heads, however thick they may be---in order to which, I will pursue the learned gentleman, thro' what he calls his probable proofs : and first, as to this tree's being cut down in the night ; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr. Serjeant ; no, quite the reverse, we can prove that the moon shone bright, with uncommon lustre that night---So that if so be as how people did not see that was done---[Serjeant *sneezes.*] nay, Mrs. Circuit, if you break the thread of my---

Mrs. Cir. Me break !---I said nothing I'm sure.

Sir Luke. That's true, but you sneez'd.

Mrs. Cir. Not I.

Sir Luke. I am sure somebody did ; it could not be the head---consider the least interruption puts one out of one's---None of our faults, they might have look'd on and seen if they would. And then as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr. Serjeant has ornamented his spot---No, gentlemen, no such matter at all ; I am instructed to say quite the reverse ; a stunted tree, a blighted, blasted tree ; a tree not only limblefs, and leafless, but very near lifeless ; that was the true state of the tree : and then as to its use, we own it was a plum-tree indeed, but not of the kind Mr. Serjeant sets forth, a damsin plum ; our proofs say loudly a bull plum ; but if so be and it had been a damsin plum, will any man go for to say, that a damsin plum is the best kind of plum ; not a whit, I take upon me to say it is not a noun substantive plum---with plenty of sugar it does pretty well indeed in a tart, but to eat it by itself, will Mr. Serjeant go to compare it with the queen mother, the padrigons---

Serj. [*Appearing suddenly from under the gown.*] The green gages, or the orlines.

Mrs. Cir. As I live 'tis my husband ! [*all run off.*]

Serj. Nay, Sir Luke don't you run away too---give me a buss---since I was born, I never heard a finer reply ; I am sorry I did not hear your argument out---but I cou'd not resist.

Sir Luke.

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Sir Luke. This I own was a little surprise---had you been long here Mr. Serjeant?

Serj. But the instant you enter'd.

Sir Luke. So, then all is safe. [*Aside.*]

Serj. But come, won't you refresh you, Sir Luke---you have had hard duty to-day.

Sir Luke. I drank very freely at table.

Serj. Nay, for the matter of that, I ha'n't been idle; [*both drink.*] But come, throw off your gown, and let us finish the bottle: I ha'n't had such a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir Luke. Nay then, Mr. Serjeant have at you---come, here's long life and health to the law. [*Drinks.*]

Serj. I'll pledge that toast in a bumper.---[*Drinks.*]---I'll take Charlot's hint, and see if I can't draw the truth out of the Knight by a bottle. [*Aside.*]

Sir Luke. I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of him that way. [*Aside.*]

Serj. I could not have thought it: why where the deuce did you pick up all this? But by the bye, pray who was the cryer?

Sir Luke. Did not you know her? Mrs. Simper, your neighbour.

Serj. A pestilent jade! she's a good one I warrant.

Sir Luke. She is thought very pretty; what say you to a glass in her favor?

Serj. By all means in the world! [*they drink*] and that spark the clerk?

Sir Luke. Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you toasted.

Serj. A friend! oh, ay---I understand you---come, let us join 'em together.

Sir Luke. Alons. [*drink*] Egad, I shall be caught in my own trap, I begin to feel myself fluster'd already. [*Aside.*]

Serj. Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glass. [*Sings.*]

Drink and drive care away,

Drink and be merry.

Sir Luke. True, my dear Serjeant---this is the searcher of secrets---the only key to the heart.

Serj. Right boy, in veritas vino.

Sir Luke. No deceit in a bumper. [*Sings.*] Drink and be merry.

Serj. Meriy! damme, what a sweet fellow you are; what would I give, to be half so jolly and gay.

Sir Luke. (*Appearing very drunk*) Would you? and yet do you know, Serjeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing that has popp'd into my head, that distresses me very much.

Serj. Then drive it out with a bumper [*Drink*] Well, how is it now.

Sir Luke. Now!—the matter is not mended at all.

Serj. What the deuce is the business that so sticks in your stomach.

Sir Luke. You know, my dear Serjeant, I am your friend, your real, your affectionate friend.

Serj. I believe it, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. And yet, for these six months, I have conceal'd a secret, that touches you near, very near—

Serj. Me near! That was wrong, very wrong; friends should have all things in common.

Sir Luke. That's what I said to myself; Sir Luke, says I, open your heart to your friend; but to tell you the truth, what sealed up my lips, was the fear that this secret should make you sulky and sad.

Serj. Me sulky and sad! ha! ha! how little you know of me.

Sir Luke. Swear then that you won't be uneasy.

Serj. Well, I do.

Sir Luke. (*Rising.*) Soft! let's see that all's safe;—well, Mr. Serjeant, do you know that you are---a fine, honest fellow?

Serj. Is that such a secret?

Sir Luke. Be quiet; a damn'd honest fellow---but as to your wife—

Serj. Well?

Sir Luke. She is an infamous strum—

Serj. How! it is a falsehood Sir Luke, my wife is as virtuous a wom—

Sir Luke. Oh! if you are angry, your servant—I thought that the news would have pleas'd you---for

after

after all, what is the business to me? What do I get by the bargain?

Serj. That's true; but then would it not vex any man to hear his wife abus'd in such a——

Sir Luke. Not if it's true, you old fool.

Serj. I say it is false: prove it; give me that satisfaction Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Oh! you shall have that pleasure directly; and to come at once to the point-- you remember last New-year's day how severely it froze.

Serj. I do recollect.

Sir Luke. Very well; we were all invited to dine at Alderman Inkle's.

Serj. Very right.

Sir Luke. Well, and I did not go: Mrs. Circuit made me dine here, in this house——was it my fault?

Serj. No, no, Sir Luke, no.

Sir Luke. At table says she—she said, I was the picture of you—was it my fault?

Serj. Well, and suppose you are; where's the mischief in that?

Sir Luke. Be quiet, I tell you;—then throwing her arms round my neck,—it is my husband himself I embrace, it is my little old man that I kiss!—for she has a prodigious affection for you at bottom—was it my fault?

Serj. But what is there serious in this, dost think I mind such trifles?

Sir Luke. Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—then throwing her Teresa aside—upon my soul she is prodigious fine every where here---was it my fault?

Serj. My fault! my fault! I see no fault in all this.

Sir Luke. [*Hutching a cry.*] No! why then my dear friend, do you know that I was so unworthy, so profligate, so abandon'd---as to---[*rises*] say no more, the business is done.

Serj. Ay, indeed!

Sir Luke. Oh! fact! there is not the least doubt of the matter; this is no *bear say*, dy'e see, I was by all the while.

Serj. Very pretty! very fine upon my word.

Sir Luke. Was it my fault? what could I do? put yourself in my place; I must have been more, or less, than man to resist.

Serj. Your fault, Sir Luke, no, no—you did but your duty—but as to my wife—

Sir Luke. She's a diabolical fiend, I shall hate her as long as I live.

Serj. And I too.

Sir Luke. Only think of her forcing me, as it were with a sword at my breast, to play such a trick; you, my dear Serjeant, the best, truest friend I have in the world. [Weeps.]

Serj. [Weeping] Dry your tears, dear Sir Luke; I shall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence in trusting me with the secret—[taking him forward.] But I think it might be as well kept from the rest of the world.

Sir Luke. My dear soul, do you think I would tell it to any mortal but you? No, no, not to my brother himself—You are the only man upon earth I wou'd trust

Serj. Ten thousand thanks, my dear friend! sure there is no comfort, no balsam in life like a friend—but I shall make Madam Circuit remember—

Sir Luke. We neither of us ought to forgive her—were I you, I'd get a divorce.

Serj. So I will—provided you will promise not to marry her after.

Sir Luke. Me! I'll sooner be torn to pieces by wild horses—no, my dear friend, we will retire to my house in the country together, and there, in innocence and simplicity, feeding our pigs and pigeons, like Pyramus and Thisbe, we will live the paragons of the age.

Serj. Agreed; we will be the whole earth to each other; for, as Mr. *Shakespur* says,

“ The friend thou hast and his adoption try'd
“ Clasp to thy soul, and quit the world beside.”—

Sir Luke. Zouns, here comes Madam Serjeant herself.

Enter

Enter Mrs. Circuit.

Mrs. Cir. So, Gentlemen! a sweet tête-a-tête you have been holding—but I know it all, not a syllable you have said has been lost.

Sir Luke. Then, I hope you have been well entertained Mrs. Circuit?

Mrs. Cir. And you, you mean spirited, dastardly wretch, to lend a patient ear to his infamous, improbable tales, equally shameful both to you and me.

Serj. How Madam! have you the assurance—

Mrs. Cir. Yes, Sir, the assurance that innocence gives; there is not a soul, I thank heaven, that can lay the least soil, the least spot, on my virtue; nor is there a man on earth but yourself would have sat and silently listen'd to the fictions and fables of this intemperate sot.

Serj. Why to be sure the Knight is overtaken a little; very near drunk.

Sir Luke. I hope he believes it is a lie. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Cir. Do me instant justice on this defamer, this liar, or never more expect to see me in your house.

Serj. I begin to find out the fraud, this is all a sham of the Knight's.

Mrs. Cir. I'll drive this instant to a friend of mine in the Commons, and see if no satisfaction can be had, for blasting the reputation of a woman like me—and hark you Sir, what inducement, what devil could prompt?—

Serj. Ay; what devil could prompt—

Sir Luke. Heyday!

Mrs. Cir. But I guess at your motive; you flatter'd yourself, that by marrying Charlot, and discarding of me you should engross all his affections and—

Serj. True, true—stop, my life, let me come at him, a little: hark you, Mr. Knight, I begin to discover that you are a very sad dog.

Sir Luke. Et tu Brute!

Serj. Brute!—you'll find I am not the brute you would have made me believe—I have consider'd both sides of the question.

Sir Luke. Both sides of the question?

Serj. Both: if your story is true, you are a scoundrel to debauch the wife of your friend; and if it is false, you are an infamous liar.

Sir Luke. Well argued.

Serj. So in both cases, get out of my house.

Sir Luke. Nay, but Serjeant—

Serj. Troop I tell you, and never again enter these walls—you have libelled my wife, and I will see you no more.

Sir Luke. Was there ever such a—

Serj. March! and as to my daughter, I would as soon marry her to a forma pauperis client.

(*Exit Sir Luke.*)

Mrs. Cir. Do you consider, Mr. Circuit, where you are pushing the fellow?—That chamber is Charlot's.

Enter Sir Luke, Woodford, Charlot, and Jack.

Sir Luke. Heyday! who the deuce have we here?—Pray walk in, my good folks—your servant Miss Charlot; your servant Mr. What-d'ye-call-um.—Mr. Serjeant, you need not trouble yourself to cater for Miss; your family you see can provide for themselves.

Serj. Heyday! What the deuce is all this! Who are you Sir, and how came you here? (*To Woodford.*)

Jack. It was I, father, that brought him.

Serj. How, sirrah!

Sir Luke. Well said my young limb of the law.

Jack. Come, let us have none o'your—tho' I brought Mr. Woodford, you could not persuade me to do the same office for you—father, never stir if he did not make me the proffer, if I would let him into the house the night you was at Kingston, of a new pair of silk stockings, and to learn me a minuet.

Sir Luke. Me! I should never have got you to turn out your toes.

Jack. Ay, and moreover you made me push out my chest, and do so with my fingers, as if I was taking two pinches of snuff.

Sir

Sir Luke. You see, Mr. Serjeant, what a fondness, I have for every twig of your family.

Serj. I shall thank *you* hereafter—but from you, Charlot, I expected other guests—

Char. When, Sir, you hear this whole matter explain'd, you will acquit I am sure.

Wood. Indeed, Sir, I am wholly to blame; my being here was as much a surprize upon Miss Charlot as—

Serj. But now you are here, pray what's your business?

Jack. O! father, I can acquaint you with that—he wanted me to bring a love letter to Charlot, so I told him he might bring it himself, for that I would not do any such thing for never so much, for fear of offending you.

Serj. You mended the matter indeed—but after all, who, and what are you?

Jack. It's the young gentleman that lives over our heads, to whom Mr. Fairplay is guardian.

Serj. Who, Woodford?

Jack. The same.

Serj. And are you, young man in a situation to think of a wife?

Wood. I am flattered, Sir, that as *justice* is with me, I shall one day have no contemptible fortune to throw at her feet.

Serj. *Justice* is! What signifies justice?—Is the *law* with you, you fool?

Wood. With your help, Sir, I should hope for their union, upon this occasion at least.

Serj. Well, Sir, I shall re-consider your papers, and if there are probable grounds, I may be induc'd to hear your proposals.

Wood. Nay then, Sir, the recovering my paternal possessions makes me anxious indeed.—Could I hope that the young lady's good wish would attend me?

Char. I have a father, and can have no will of my own.

Sir Luke. So then it seems poor Pil Garlick here is discarded at once.

Serj.

Serj. Why, could you have the impudence, after what has happen'd, to hope that——

Mrs. Cir. He has given wonderful proofs of his modesty.

Sir Luke. Be quiet, Mrs. Circuit.—Come, good folks, I will set all matters to right in a minute; and first, Mr. Serjeant, it becomes me to tell you, that I never intended to marry your daughter.

Serj. How! never!

Sir Luke. Never. She is a fine girl I allow; but would it now Mr. Serjeant, have been honest in me, to have robb'd the whole sex of my person, and confin'd my favours to her?

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. No! I was struck with the immorality of the thing; and therefore to make it impossible that you should ever give me your daughter, I invented the story I told you concerning Mrs. Circuit and me.

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. Truth, upon my honour.—Your wife there will tell you the whole was a lye.

Serj. Nay, then indeed.—But with what face can I look up to my dear? I have injur'd her beyond the hopes of forgiveness.—Wou'd you, lovee, but pass an act of oblivion—

Sir Luke. See me here prostrate to implore your clemency in behalf of my friend.

Mrs. Cir. Of that I can't determine directly.—But as you seem to have some sense of your guilt, I shall grant you a reprieve for the present; which contrition and amendment may, perhaps, in time swell into a pardon.

But if again offending you are caught,

Serj. Then let me suffer, dearee, as I ought.

14 N063

F I N I S

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P R O L O G U E.

WHAT various revolutions in our art,
Since Thespis first sung ballads in a cart!

By nature fram'd the witty war to wage,
And lay the deep foundations of the stage,
From his own soil that bard his pictures drew :
The gaping crowd the mimic features knew,
And the broad jest with fire electric flew.
Succeeding times, more polish'd and refin'd,
Tho' rigid rules the comic muse confin'd :
Robb'd of the nat'ral freedom of her song,
In artful measures now she floats along ;
No sprightly sallies rouse the slumb'ring pit ;
Thalia, grown mere architect in wit.
To doors and ladders has confin'd her cares,
Convenient closets, and a snug back-stairs ;
'Twixt her and Satire has dissolv'd the league,
And jilted Humour to enjoy Intrigue.
To gain the suff'rage of this polish'd age,
We bring to-night a stranger on the stage :
His fire De Vega ; we confess this truth,
Lest you mistake him for a British youth.
Severe the censure on my feeble pen,
Neglecting manners, that she copies men :
Thus, if I hum or ha, or name report,
'Tis Serjeant Splitcause from the Inns of Court ;
If, at the age that ladies cease to dance,
To romp at Ranelagh, or read romance,
I draw a dowager inclin'd to man,
Or paint he rage for china or japan,
The true original is quickly known,
And lady Squab proclaim'd throughout the town.
But in the following group let no man dare
To claim a limb, nay, not a single hair :
What gallant Briton can be such a sot
To own the child a Spaniard has begot.

Dra-

14 N033

Sir J
OLD
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The

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir JAMES ELLIOT,	—	Mr. Davis.
OLD WILDING, the Father,		Mr. Castle:
YOUNG WILDING,	—	Mr. Foote.
PAPILLION,	— —	Mr. Weston.

W O M E N.

Miss GRANTAM,	—	Mrs. Jeffries.
Miss GODFREY,	— —	Mrs. Brown.
KITTY, the Maid,	—	Mrs. Parsons.

The SERVANTS.

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L

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Y. W.

Pap.

Y. W.

Pap.

Y. W.

Pap.

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the dr

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Pap.

THE
L Y A R.

A C T I.

SCENE a Lodging.

Young Wilding and Papillion discovered.

Young Wilding.

AND I am now, Papillion, perfectly equipped ?

Pap. Personne mieux. Nobody better.

Y. Wild. My figure ?

Pap. Fait a peindre.

Y. Wild. My air ?

Pap. Libre.

Y. Wild. My address ?

Pap. Parisienne.

Y. Wild. My hat fits easily under my arm ; not like the draggled tail of my tatter'd academical habit.

Pap. Ah, bien autre chose.

Y. Wild. Why then adieu, Alma Mater, and bienvenue, la ville de Londres ; farewell to the schools, and welcome the theatres ; presidents, proctors, short commons with long graces, must now give place to plays, bagnios, long tavern-bills with no graces at all.

Pap. Ah, bravo, bravo !

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Well, but my dear Papillion, you must give me the chart du paye : This town is a new world to me ; my provident papa, you know, would never suffer me near the smoak of London ; and what can be his motive for permitting me now, I can't readily conceive.

Pap. Ni moi.

Y. Wild. I shall, however, take the liberty to conceal my arrival from him for a few days.

Pap. Vous avez raison.

Y. Wild. Well my Mentor, and how am I to manage ? direct my road : where must I begin ? But the debate is, I suppose, of consequence ?

Pap. Vraiment.

Y. Wild. How long have you left Paris, Papillion ?

Pap. Twelve, thirteen year.

Y. Wild. I can't compliment you upon your progress in English.

Pap. The accent is difficult.

Y. Wild. But here you are at home.

Pap. C'est vrai.

Y. Wild. No stranger to fashionable places.

Pap. O faite !

Y. Wild. Acquainted with the fashionable figures of both sexes.

Pap. Sans doute.

Y. Wild. Well then, open your lecture : And, d'ye hear, Papillion, as you have the honour to be promoted from the Mortifying condition of an humble valet, to the important charge of a private tutor, let us discard all distance between us : See me ready to slack my thirst at your fountain of knowledge, my MagnusApollo.

Pap. Here then I disclose my Helicon to my poetical pupil.

Y. Wild. Hey, Papillion !

Pap. Sir ?

Y. Wild. What is this ? why you speak English !

Pap. Without doubt.

Y. Wild. But like a native ?

Pap. To be sure.

Y. Wild. And what am I to conclude from all this ?

Pap.

Pap. Logically thus, Sir : Whoever speaks pure English is an Englishman : I speak pure English ; ergo, I am an Englishman. There's a categorical syllogism for you, Major, Minor, and Consequence. What do you think, Sir, that whilst you was busy at Oxford, I was idle ? no, no, no.

Y. Wild. Well, Sir, but notwithstanding your pleasantry, I must have this matter explain'd.

Pap. So you shall, my good Sir ; but don't be in such a hurry : You can't suppose I would give you the key, unless I meant you should open the door.

Y. Wild. Why then, prythee unlock.

Pap. Immediately. But by way of entering upon my post as preceptor, suffer me first to give you a hint : You must not expect, Sir, to find here, as at Oxford, men appearing in their real characters ; every body there, Sir, knows that Dr. Mussy is a fellow of Maudlin, and Tom Trifle a student of Christchurch ; but this town is one great comedy, in which not only the principles, but frequently the persons are feigned.

Y. Wild. A useful observation.

Pap. Why now, Sir, at the first coffee-house I shall enter you, you will perhaps meet a man from whose decent sable dress, placid countenance, insinuating behaviour, short sword, with the waiter's civil addition of—"a dish of coffee for Dr. Julap," you would suppose him to be a physician.

Y. Wild. Well ?

Pap. Does not know diascordium from diaculum. An absolute French spy, concealed under the shelter of a huge medicinal perriwig.

Y. Wild. Indeed !

Pap. A martial figure too, it is odds but you will encounter ; from whose scars, title, dress, and address, you would suppose to have had a share in every action since the peace of the Pyrenees ; runner to a gaming-table, and bully to a bawdy-house. Battles, to be sure, he has been in—with the watch ; and frequently a prisoner too—in the round-house.

Y. Wild. Amazing !

Pap.

Pap. In short, Sir, you will meet with lawyers who practise smuggling, and merchants who trade upon Hounslow-heath; reverend atheists, right honourable sharpers, and Frenchmen from the county of York.

Y. Wild. In the last list, I presume, you roll.

Pap. Just my situation.

Y. Wild. And pray, Sir, what may be your motive for this whimsical transformation?

Pap. A very harmless one, I promise you. I would only avail myself at the expence of folly and prejudice.

Y. Wild. As how?

Pap. Why, Sir,—But, to be better understood, I believe it will be necessary to give you a short sketch of the principal incidents of my life.

Y. Wild. Præthee do.

Pap. Why then you are to know, Sir, that my former situation has been rather above my present condition, having once sustained the dignity of sub-preceptor to one of those cheap rural academies with which our county of York is so plentifully stocked.

Y. Wild. But to the point: Why this disguise?—Why renounce your country?

Pap. There Sir, you make a little mistake; it was my country that renounced me.

Y. Wild. Explain.

Pap. In an instant, upon my quitting the school, and first coming to town, I got recommended to the compiler of the Monthly Review.

Y. Wild. What an author too?

Pap. Oh, a voluminous one: The whole region of the Belles Lettres fell under my inspection; physic, divinity, and the mathematics, my mistress managed herself. There, Sir, like another Aristarch, I dealt out fame and damnation at pleasure. In obedience to the caprice and commands of my master, I have condemn'd books I never read, and applauded the fidelity of a translation, without understanding one syllable of the original.

Y. Wild. Ah! why I thought acuteness of discernment, and depth of knowledge, were necessary to accomplish a critic.

Pap.

Pap. Yes, Sir ; but not a monthly one. Our method was very concise : We copy the title-page of a new book ; but never go farther : If we are order'd to praise it, we have at hand about ten words, which, scatter'd through as many periods, effectually does the business ; as, " laudable design, happy arrangement, spirited language, nervous sentiment, elevation of thought, conclusive argument ;" if we are to decry, then we have " unconnected, flat, false, illiberal stricture, reprehensible, unnatural ;" And thus, sir, we pepper the author, and soon rid our hands of his work.

Y. Wild. A short recipe.

Pap. And yet, sir, you have all the materials that are necessary : These are the arms with which we engage authors of every kind. To us all subjects are equal ;—plays or sermons, poetry or politics, music or midwifry, it is the same thing.

Y. Wild. How came you to resign this easy employment ?

Pap. It would not answer. Notwithstanding what we say, people will judge for themselves ; our work hung upon hands, and all I could get from the publisher was four shillings a-week, and my small beer. Poor pit-tance !

Y. Wild. Poor indeed.

Pap. Oh, half-starv'd me !

Y. Wild. What was your next change ?

Pap. I was mightily puzzled to choose. Some would have had me turn player, and others methodist preacher ; but as I had no money to build me a tabernacle, I did not think it could answer ; and as to player—whatever might happen to me, I was determined not to bring a disgrace upon my family, and so I resolved to turn foot-man.

Y. Wild. Wisely resolv'd.

Pap. Yes, sir, but not so easily executed.

Y. Wild. No !

Pap. Oh no, sir. Many a weary step have I taken after a place : Here I was too old, there I was too young ; here the last livery was too big, there it was too little ; here I was awkward, there I was knowing ; madam dis-lik'd

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Y. Wild. No !

Pap. Oh no, sir. Many a weary step have I taken after a place : Here I was too old, there I was too young ; here the last livery was too big, there it was too little ; here I was awkward, there I was knowing ; madam dislike'd

lik'd me at this house, her ladyship's woman at the next ; so that I was as much puzzled to find out a place, as the great Cynic philosopher to discover a man. In short, I was quite in a state of despair, when chance threw an old friend in my way that quite retrieved my affairs.

Y. Wild. Pray who might he be.

Pap. A little bit of a Swiss genius, who had been French usher with me at the same school in the country. I opened my melancholy story to him over three-penny-worth of beef-a-la-mode, in a cellar, in St. Ann's. My little foreign friend push'd up his lanthron jaws, and with a shrug of contempt, " Ah, maître Jean, vous n'avez pas la politique ; you have no finesse : To trive here you must study the folly of your own country."—" How, Monsieur !" " Taisez vous. Keep a your tongue ! autre fois ! I teach you to speak French, now I teach a you to forget English. Go vid me to my lodgement, I vil give you proper drefs, den go present yourself to de same hotels, de very same house ; you vil find all de doors dat was shut in your face as footman Anglois. vil fly open demselves to a French valet de chambre."

Y. Wild. Well Papillion ?

Pap. Gad, sir, I thought it was an honest artifice, so I determin'd to follow my friend's advice.

Y. Wild. Did it succeed ?

Pap. Better than expectation : My tawny face, long queue, and broken English, was a pas par tout. Besides, when I am out of place, this disguise procures me many resources.

Y. Wild. As how ?

Pap. Why, at a pinch, sir, I am either a teacher of tongues, a friseur, a dentist, or a dancing-master ;—these, sir, are hereditary professions to Frenchmen. But now, sir, to the point : As you are pleased to be so candid with me, I was determin'd to have no reserve with you. You have studied books, I have studied men ; you want advice, and I have some at your service.

Y. Wild. Well, I'll be your customer.

Pap. But guard my secret ; if I should be so unfortunate to lose your place, don't shut me out from every other.

Y. Wild.

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Y. Wild. You may rely upon me.

Pap. In a few years I shall be in a condition to retire from business ; but whether I shall settle at my family-seat, or pass over to the continent, is as yet undetermined. Perhaps, in gratitude to the country, I may purchase a marquisate near Paris, and spend the money I have got by their means, generously amongst them.

Y. Wild. A grateful intention. But let us sally. Where do we open ?

Pap. Let me see—one o'clock—it is a fine day ; the Mall will be crowded.

Y. Wild. Alons.

Pap. But don't stare, Sir ; survey every thing with an air of habit and indifference.

Y. Wild. Never fear.

Pap. But I would, Sir, crave a moment's audience, upon a subject that may prove very material to you.

Y. Wild. Proceed.

Pap. You will pardon my presumption ; but you have, my good master, one little foible that I could wish you to correct.

Y. Wild. What is it ?

Pap. And yet it is a pity too, you do it so very well ?

Y. Wild. Prithee be plain.

Pap. You have, Sir, a lively imagination, with a most happy turn for invention.

Y. Wild. Well.

Pap. But now and then in your narratives you are hurry'd, by a flow of spirits, to border upon the improbable, a little given to the marvelous.

Y. Wild. I understand you : what, I am somewhat subject to lying.

Pap. Oh, pardon me, Sir ; I don't say that ; no, no, only a little apt to embellish ; that's all. To be sure it is a fine gift ; that there is no disputing : but men in general are so stupid, so rigorously attach'd to matter of fact——And yet this talent of yours is the very soul and spirit of poetry ; and why should it not be the same in prose, I can't for my life determine.

Y. Wild. You advise me, then, not to be quite so poetical in my prose ?

Pap.

Pap. Why, Sir, if you would descend a little to the grovelling comprehension of the million, I think it would be as well.

Y. Wild. I'll think of it.

Pap. Besides, Sir, in this town people are more smoaky and suspicious. Oxford, you know, is the seat of the muses, and a man is naturally permitted more ornament and garniture to his conversation than they will allow in this latitude.

Y. Wild. I believe you are right. But we shall be late. D'ye hear me, Papillion: if at any time you find me growing too poetical give me a hint; your advice shan't be thrown away. *(Exit.)*

Pap. I wish it mayn't; but the disease is too rooted to be quickly removed. Lord, how I have sweat for him! yet he is as unimbarressed, easy, and fluent, all the time, as if he really believed what he said. Well, to be sure he is a great master; it is a thousand pities his genius could not be converted to some public service; I think the government should employ him to answer the Brussels Gazette. Ill be hanged if he is not too many for Monsieur Maubert, at his own weapons. *[Exit.]*

S C E N E the Park.

Enter Miss Grantam and Miss Godfrey, and a Servant.

Miss Gr. John, let the chariot go round to Spring-Gardens, for your mistress and I shall call at Lady Bab's, Miss Arabella Allnight's, the countess of Crumple's, and the tall man's, this morning. My dear miss Godfrey, what trouble I have had to get you out! why, child, you are as tedious as a long mourning. Do you know now, that of all the places of public rendezvous I honour the Park? forty thousand million of times preferable to the play-house! Don't you think so my dear?

M. God. They are both well in their way.

M. Gr. Way! why the purpose of both is the same; to meet company, isn't it? what, d'ye think I go there for the plays, or come here for the tree's? ha, ha! well, that is well enough. But, O Gemini! I beg a
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M. Gr.

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million of pardons ; You are a prude, and have no relish for the little innocent liberties with which a fine woman may indulge herself in public.

M. God. Liberties in public !

M. Gr. Yes, child, such as encoring a song at an opera, interrupting a play in a critical scene of distress, hallooing a pretty fellow cros the Mall, as loud as if you were calling a coach. Why, do you know, my dear that by a lucky stroke in dress, and a few high airs of my own making, I have had the good fortune to be gazed at and followed by as great a crowd, on a Sunday, as if I was the Tripoly ambaffador ?

M. God. The good fortune, Ma'am ! Surely the wish of every decent woman is to be unnotic'd in public.

M. Gr. Decent ! oh, my dear queer creature, what a phrafe have you found out for a woman of fashion ! Decency is, child, a mere bourgeois, plebeian quality, and fit only for those who pay court to the world, and not for us to whom the world pays court. Upon my word, you must enlarge your ideas : you are a fine girl, and we must not have you lost ; I'll undertake you myself. But, as I was saying,——Pray, my dear, what was I saying.

M. God. I profess I don't recollect.

M. Gr. Hey !—Oh, ah, the Park. One great reason for my loving the Park is, that one has so many opportunities of creating connections.

M. God. Ma'am !

M. Gr. Nay, don't look grave, Why, do you know that all my male friendships are form'd in this place ?

M. God. It is an odd spot : But you must pardon me if I doubt the possibility.

M. Gr. Oh, I will convince you in a moment ; for here seems to be coming a good smart figure that I do'nt recollect. I will throw out a lure.

M. God. Nay, for heaven's sake !

M. Gr. I am determin'd, child : that is——

M. God. You will excuse my withdrawing.

M. Gr. Oh, please yourself, my dear.

[Exit Miss Godfrey.

Enter Young Wilding with Papillion.

Y. Wild. Your ladyships handkerchief, Ma'am.

M. Gr. I am, Sir, concern'd at the trouble—

Y. Wild. A most happy incident for me, Madam; as chance has given me an honour in one lucky minute, that the most diligent attention has not been able to procure for me in the whole tedious round of a revolving year.

M. Gr. Is this meant to me, Sir?

Y. Wild. To whom else, Madam? Surely, you must have mark'd my respectful assiduity, my uninterrupted attendance; to plays, operas, balls, routs, and ridottas, I have pursued you like your shadow; I have besieged your door for a glimpse of your exit and entrance, like a distressed creditor, who has no arms against privilege but perseverance.

Pap. So, now he is in for it; stop him who can.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, ever since I quitted America, which I take now to be about a year, I have as faithfully guarded the live-long night, your ladyship's portal, as a centinel the powder-magazine in a fortified city.

Pap. Quitted America! well pull'd.

M. Gr. You have serv'd in America then?

Y. Wild. Full four years, Ma'am: and during that whole time, not a single action of consequence, but I had an opportunity to signalize myself; and I think I may, without vanity, affirm I did not miss the occasion? You have heard of Quebec, I presume?

Pap. What the deuce is he driving at now?

Y. Wi. The project to surprize that place was thought a happy expedient, and the first mounting the breach a gallant exploit. There indeed, the whole army did me justice.

M. Gr. I have heard the honour of that conquest attributed to another name.

Y. Wild. The mere taking the town, Ma'am. But that's a trifle: Sieges now a-days are reduc'd to certainties; it is amazing how minutely exact we, who know the business are at calculation: For instance now,

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we will suppose the commander in chief, addressing himself to me, was to say, "Colonel, I want to reduce that fortress; what will be the expence?"

"Why, please your highness, the reduction of that fortress will cost you one thousand and two lives, sixty-nine legs, ditto arms, fourscore fractures, with about twenty dozen of flesh wounds."

M. Gr. And you should be near the mark?

Y. Wild. To an odd joint, Ma'am. But, Madam, it is not to the French alone that my feats are confin'd: Cherokees, Catabaws, with all the Aws and Ews of the continent, have felt the force of my arms.

Pap. This is too much, Sir.

Y. Wild. Hands off! Nor am I less adroit at a treaty, Madam, than terrible in battle: To me we owe the friendship of the Five Nations, and I had the first honour of smoaking the pipe of peace with the Little Carpenter.

M. Gr. And so young!

Y. Wild. This gentleman, though a Frenchman and an enemy, I had the fortune to deliver from the Mohawks, whose prisoner he had been for nine years. He gives a most entertaining account of their laws and customs: he shall present you with the wampum-belt, and a scalping-knife. Will you permit him, Madam, just to give you a taste of the military dance, with a short specimen of their warhoop.

Pap. For heaven's sake.

M. Gr. The place is too public.

Y. Wild. In short, Madam, after having gathered as many laurels abroad as would garnish a Gothic cathedral at Christmas, I returned to reap the harvest of the well-fought field. Here it was my good fortune to encounter you: then was the victor vanquished; what the enemy could never accomplish, your eyes in an instant atchiev'd; prouder to serve here than command in chief elsewhere; and more glorious in wearing your chains, than in triumphing over the vanquish'd world.

M. Gr. I have got here a most heroical lover: but I see Sir James Elliot coming, and must dismiss him.

[*Aside.*] Well Sir, I accept the tendre of your passion,

and may find a time to renew our acquaintance ; at present it is necessary we should separate.

Y. Wild. " Slave to your will, I live but to obey you." But may I be indulged with the knowledge of your residence.

M. Gr. Sir ?

Y. Wild. Your place of abode.

M. Gr. Oh, Sir, you can't want to be acquainted with that ; you have a whole year flood centinel at my ladyship's portal.

Y. Wild. Madam, I—I—I——

M. Gr. Oh, Sir, your servant. Ha, ha, ha ! What, you are caught ! Ha, ha, ha ! Well, he has a most intrepid assurance. Adieu, my Mars. Ha, ha, ha !

[Exit

Pap. That last was an unlucky question, Sir.

Y. Wild. A little mal-a-propos I must confess.

Pap. A man should have a good memory who leans much in this poetical prose.

Y. Wild. Poh ! I'll soon re-establish my credit. But I must know who this girl is : Hark ye, Papillion, could not you contrive to pump out of her footman—I see there he stands—the name of his mistress ?

Pap. I will try.

[Exit

[Wilding retires to the back of the stage.

Enter Sir James Elliot, and Servant.

Sir James. Music and entertainment ?

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Sir Ja. Last night upon the water ?

Serv. Upon the water, last night.

Sir Ja. Who gave it ?

Serv. That, Sir, I can't say.

To them Wilding.

Y. Wild. Sir James Elliot your most devoted.

Sir Ja. Ah, my dear Wilding ! you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. You will pardon my impatience ; I interrupted you ; you seem'd upon an interesting subject.

Sir Ja. Oh, an affair of gallantry.

Y. Wild. Of what kind ?

Sir Ja. A young lady regal'd last night by her lover, on the Thames.

Y. Wild. As how ?

Sir Ja. A band of music in boats.

Y. Wild. Were they good performers ?

Sir Ja. The best. Then conducted to Marble-hall, where she found a magnificent collation.

Y. Wild. Well order'd ?

Sir Ja. With elegance. After supper a ball ; and, to conclude the night, a firework.

Y. Wild. Was the last well design'd ?

Sir Ja. Superb.

Y. Wild. And happily executed ?

Sir Ja. Not a single faux pas.

Y. Wild. And you don't know who gave it ?

Sir Ja. I can't even guess.

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha !

Sir Ja. Why do you laugh ?

Y. Wild. Ha, ha, ha ! It was me.

Sir Ja. You !

Pap. You, Sir !

Y. Wild. Moi—me.

Pap. So, so, so ; he is enter'd again.

Sir Ja. Why, you are fortunate, to find a mistress in so short a space of time.

Y. Wild. Short ! why, man, I have been in London these six weeks.

Pap. O Lord, O Lord !

Y. Wild. It is true, not caring to encounter my father, I have rarely ventur'd out but at nights.

Pap. I can hold no longer. Dear Sir.

Y. Wild. Peace, puppy !

Pap. A curb to your poetical vein.

Y. Wild. I shall curb your impertinence.—But since the story has gone abroad, I will my dear friend, treat you with all the particulars.

Sir Ja. I shall hear it with pleasure.—This is a lucky adventure : But he must not know he is my rival. [*Aside.*]
Y. Wild. Why, Sir, between six and seven my goddels imbark'd at Somerset-stairs, in one of the company's barges, gilt and hung with damask, expressly for the occasion.

Pap. Mercy on us !

Pap. At the cabin-door she was accosted by a beautiful boy, who, in the garb of a Cupid, paid her some compliments in verse of my own composing : The conceits were pretty ; allusions to Venus and the sea—the lady and the Thames—no great matter ; but, however, well-tim'd, and what was better, well taken.

Sir Ja. Doubtless.

Pap. At what a rate he runs !

Y. Wild. A soon as we had gain'd the center of the river, two boats full of trumpets, French-horns, and other martial music, struck up their sprightly strains from the Surry-side, which were eccho'd by a suitable number of lutes, flutes, and hautboys from the opposite shore. In this state, the oars keeping time, we majestically sail'd along, till the arches of the New Bridge gave a pause, and an opportunity for an elegant desert in Dresden china, by Robinson. Here the repast clos'd, with a few favourite airs from Eliza, Tenducci, and the Mattei.

Pap. Mercy on us !

Y. Wild. Opposite Lambeth I had prepared a naval engagement, in which Boscawen's victory over the French was repeated : the action was conducted by one of the commanders on that expedition, and not a single incident omitted.

Sir Ja. Surely you exaggerate a little.

Pap. Yes, yes, this battle will sink him.

Y. Wild. True to the letter, upon my honour,—I sha'n't trouble you with a repetition of our collation, ball, feu d'artifice, with the thousand little incidental amusements that chance or design produc'd : it is an enough to know, that all that could flatter the senses, fire the imagination, or gratify the expectation, was there produc'd in a lavish abundance.

Sir Ja.

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Sir Ja. The sacrifice was, I presume, grateful to your deity.

Y. Wild. Upon that subject you must pardon my silence.

Pap. Modest creature !

Sir Ja. I wish you joy of your success.—For the present you will excuse me.

Y. Wild. Nay, but stay and hear the conclusion.

Sir Ja. For that I shall seize another occasion. [*Exit.*]

Pap. Nobly perform'd, Sir.

Y. Wild. Yes, I think happily hit off.

Pap. May I take the liberty to offer one question ?

Y. Wild. Freely.

Pap. Pray, Sir, are you often visited with these waking dreams ?

Y. Wild. Dreams ! what dost mean by dreams ?

Pap. These ornamental reveries, these frolics of fancy, which, in the judgment of the vulgar, would be deem'd absolute fams.

Y. Wild. Why, Papillion, you have but a poor, narrow, circumscribed genius.

Pap. I most own, Sir, I have not sublimity sufficient to relish the full fire of your Pindaric muse.

Y. Wild. No ; a plebian soul ! But I will animate thy clay : mark my example, follow my steps, and in time thou may'st rival thy master.

Pap. Never, never, Sir ; I have not talents to fight battles without blows, and give feasts that do not cost my a farthing. Besides, sir, to what purpose are all these embellishments ? Why tell the lady you have been in London a year ?

Y. Wild. The better to plead the length, and consequently the strength of my passion.

Pap. But why, Sir, a soldier.

Y. Wild. How little thou know'st of the sex ! What, I suppose thou would'st have me attack them in mood and figure, by a pedantic, classical quotation, or a pompous parade of jargon from the schools. What, dost think that women are to be got like degrees ?

Pap. Nay, Sir.—

Y. Wild. No, no; the *savoir-vivre* is the science for them; the man of war is the man; they must be taken like towns, by lines of approach, counterescarp, angles, trenches, cohorn, and covert-ways; then enter sword in hand, pell mell! oh, how they melt at the Gothic names of General Swappinback, Count Roussonmoufky, Prince Montecuculi, and Marshal Fustinburgh! Men may say what they will of their Ovid, their Petrarch, and their Waller, but I'll undertake to do more business by the single aid of the London Gazette, than by all the sighing, dying, crying crotchets, that the whole race of rhymers have ever produced.

Pap. Very well, Sir; this is all very lively; but remember the travelling pitcher: if you don't one time or other, under favour, lye yourself into some confounded scrape I will be content to be hanged.

Y. Wild. Do you think so, Papillion?—And whenever that happens, if I don't lye myself out of it again, why then I will be content to be crucify'd. And so, along after the lady. [*Stops short, going out.*] Zounds, here comes my father! I must fly. Watch him, Papillion, and bring me word to the Cardigan.

[*Exeunt separately*]

E N D of the FIRST ACT.

A C T III.

S C E N E a Tavern.

Young Wilding and Papillion rising from a table.

Young Wilding.

G A D, I had like to have run into the old gentleman's mouth.

Pap. It is pretty near the same thing; for I saw him join Sir James Elliot: so your arrival is no longer a secret.

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Why then I must lose my pleasure, and your preferment: I must submit to the dull decency of a sober family, and you to the customary duties of brushing and powdering. But I was so flutter'd at meeting my father, that I forgot the fair: pr'ythee who is she?

Pap. There were two.

Y. Wild. That I saw?

Pap. From her footman I learnt her name was Godfrey.

Y. Wild. And her fortune?

Pap. Immense.

Y. Wild. Single, I hope?

Pap. Certainly.

Y. Wild. Then will I have her.

Pap. What, whether she will or no?

Y. Wild. Yes.

Pap. How will you manage that?

Y. Wild. By making it impossible for her to marry any one else.

Pap. I don't understand you, Sir.

Y. Wild. Oh, I shall only have recourse to that talent you so mightily admire. You will see, by the circulation of a few anecdotes, how soon I will get rid of my rivals.

Pap. At the expence of the lady's reputation, perhaps.

Y. Wild. That will be as it happens.

Pap. And have you no qualms, Sir?

Y. Wild. Why, where's the injury?

Pap. No injury to ruin her fame!

Y. Wild. I will restore it to her again.

Pap. How?

Y. Wild. Turn tinker, and mend it myself.

Pap. Which way?

Y. Wild. The old way; solder it by marriage: that, you know, is the modern salve for every sore.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. An elderly gentleman to enquire for Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. For me ! what sort of a being is it ?

Wait. Being, Sir !

Y. Wild. Ah ; how is he drest ?

Wait. In a tye-wig and snuff-colour'd coat.

Pap. Zooks, Sir, it is your father.

Y. Wild. Shew him up. [Exit Wait.

Pap. And what must I do ?

Y. Wild. Recover your broken English, but preserve your rank ; I have a reason for it.

Enter Old Wilding.

O. Wild. Your servant, Sir ; you are welcome to town.

Y. Wild. You have just prevented me, Sir ; I was preparing to pay my duty to you.

O. Wild. If you thought it a duty, you should, I think, have sooner discharg'd it.

Y. Wild. Sir !

O. Wild. Was it quite so decent, Jack, to be six weeks in town, and conceal yourself only from me ?

Y. Wild. Six weeks ! I have scarce been six hours.

O. Wild. Come, come ; I am better inform'd.

Y. Wild. Indeed, Sir, you are impos'd upon. This gentleman (whom first give me leave to have the honour of introducing to you), this, Sir, is the marquis de Chatteau Briant, of an ancient house in Brittany ; who travelling thro' England, chose to make Oxford for some time the place of his residence, where I had the happiness of his acquaintance.

O. Wild. Does he speak English.

Y. Wild. Not fluently, but understands it perfectly.

Pap. Pray, Sir—

O. Wild. Any services, Sir, that I can render you here you may readily command.

Pap. Beaucoup d'honneur.

Y. Wild. This gentleman, I say, Sir, whose quality and country are sufficient securities for his veracity, will assure you that yesterday we left Oxford together.

O. W. Indeed !

Pap. C'est vrai.

O. Wild.

O. Wild. This is amazing, I was, at the same time inform'd of another circumstance too, that, I confess, made me a little uneasy, as it interfer'd with a favourite scheme of my own.

T. Wild. What could that be, pray, Sir?

O. Wild. That you had conceiv'd a violent affection for a fair lady.

T. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And had given her very gallant and very expensive proofs of your passion.

T. Wild. Me, Sir!

O. Wild. Particularly last night; music, collation, balls, and fireworks.

T. Wild. Monsieur le marquis!—And pray, Sir, who could tell you all this?

O. Wild. An old friend of yours.

T. Wild. His name, if you please.

O. Wild. Sir James Elliot.

T. Wild. Yes; I thought he was the man.

O. Wild. Your reason.

T. Wild. Why, Sir, though Sir James Elliot has a great many good qualities, and is, upon the whole, a valuable man, yet he has one fault which has long determined me to drop his acquaintance.

O. Wild. What may that be?

T. Wild. Why you can't, Sir, be a stranger to his prodigious skill in the traveller's talent.

O. Wild. How!

T. Wild. Oh, notorious to a proverb.—His friends, who are tender of his fame, gloss over his foible, by calling him an agreeable novelist; and so he is, with a vengeance: Why, he will tell you more lies in an hour, than all the circulating libraries, put together, will publish in a year.

O. Wild. Indeed!

T. Wild. Oh, he is the modern Mandeville at Oxford: he was always distinguish'd by the facetious appellation of the Bouncer.

O. Wild. Amazing!

T. Wild. Lord, Sir, he is so well understood in his own country, that at the last Hertford assize, a cause,

as clear as the sun, was absolutely thrown away by his being merely mentioned as a witness.

O. Wild. A strange turn.

Y. Wild. Unaccountable. But there, I think, they went a little too far; for if it had come to an oath, I don't think he would have bounc'd neither; but in common occurrences there is no repeating after him. Indeed, my great reason for dropping him was, that my credit began to be a little suspected too.

Pap. Poor gentleman!

O. Wild. Why, I never heard this of him.

Y. Wild. That may be; but can there be a stronger proof of his practice than the flim he has been telling you, of fireworks, and the Lord knows what. And I dare swear, Sir, he was very fluent and florid in his description.

O. Wild. Extremely.

Y. Wild. Yes, that is just his way; and not a syllable of truth from the beginning to the ending, marquiss?

Pap. Oh, dat is all a fiction upon my honour.

Y. Wild. You see, Sir.

O. Wild. Clearly. I really can't help pitying the poor man, I have heard of people, who, by long habit, become a kind of constitutional lyars.

Y. Wild. Your observation is just; that is exactly his case.

Pap. I'm sure it is yours.

[*Aside.*

O. Wild. Well; Sir, I suppose we shall see you this evening.

Y. Wild. The marquiss has an appointment with some of his countrymen, which I have promis'd to attend; besides, Sir, as he is an entire stranger in town, he may want my little services.

O. Wild. Where can I see you in about an hour? I have a short visit to make, in which you are deeply concern'd

Y. Wild. I shall attend your commands; but where?

O. Wild. Why here. Marquiss, I am your obedient servant.

Pap. Votre serviteur tres humble,

[*Exit Old Wilding.*
Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. So, Papillion ; that difficulty is dispatch'd.
I think I am even with Sir James for his tattling.

Pap. Most ingeniously manag'd : But are not you afraid of the consequence ?

Y. Wild. I don't comprehend you.

Pap. A future explanation between the parties.

Y. Wild. That may embarrass ; but the day is distant.
I warrant I will bring myself off.

Pap. It is in vain for me to advise.

Y. Wild. Why, to say truth, I do begin to find my system attended with danger : Give me your hand, Papillion—I will reform.

Pap. Ah, Sir.

Y. Wild. I positively will : Why this practice may in time destroy my credit.

Pap. That is pretty well done already. [*Aside.*—Ah, think of that, Sir.

Y. Wild. Well, if I don't turn out the meerest dull matter of fact fellow——But, Papillion, I must scribble a billet to my new flame. I think her name is——

Pap. Godfrey ; her father, an India governor shut up in the strong room at Calcutta, left her all his wealth : she lives near Miss Grantam, by Grosvenor square.

P. Wild. A governor !—oh ho !—Bushels of rupees, and pecks of pagodas, I reckon.——Well, I long to be rummaging.—But the old gentleman will soon return : I will hasten to finish my letter.—But, Papillion, what could my father mean by a visit in which I am deeply concern'd ?

Pap. I can't guess.

Y. Wild. I shall know presently.——To Miss Godfrey, formerly of Calcutta, now residing in Grosvenor-square.—Papillion, I won't tell her a word of a lye.

Pap. You won't, Sir ?

Y. Wild. No ; it would be ungenerous to deceive a lady. No ; I will be open, candid, and sincere.

Pap. And if you are, it will be the first time.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter Miss Grantam and Miss Godfrey.

M. God. And you really like this gallant spark?

M. Gr. Prodigiously. Oh, I'm quite in love with his assurance! I wonder who he is. He can't have been long in town. A young fellow of his easy impudence must have soon made his way to the best of company.

M. God. By way of amusement he may prove no disagreeable acquaintance; but you can't, surely, have any serious designs upon him.

M. Gr. Indeed but I have.

M. God. And poor Sir James Elliot is to be discarded at once?

M. Gr. Oh, no.

M. God. What is your intention in regard to him?

M. Gr. Hey?—I can't tell you. Perhaps, if I don't like this new man better, I may marry him.

M. God. Thou art a strange giddy girl.

M. Gr. Quite the reverse; a perfect pattern of prudence: why, would you have me less careful of my person than my purse?

M. God. My dear!

M. Gr. Why I say, child, my fortune being in money, I have some in India-bonds, some in the Bank, some on this loan, some on the other; so that if one fund fails, I have a sure resource in the rest.

M. God. Very true.

M. Gr. Well, my dear, just so I manage my love-affairs: if I should not like this man—if he should not like me—if we should quarrel—if, if—or in short, if any of the ifs should happen, which you know break engagements every day, why by this means I shall be never at a loss.

M. God. Quite provident. Well, and pray on how many different securities have you at present plac'd out your love?

M. Gr. Three: the sober Sir James Elliot, the new American man, and this morning I expected a formal proposal from an old friend of my father.

M. God. Mr. Wilding.

M. Gr.

M. G.
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thought
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to one's

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M. G.
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M. G.
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O. W.
Madam
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M. G.
O. W.
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O. W.
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O. W.
M. G.
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should
lover, if
O. W.

M. Gr. Yes; but I don't reckon much upon him: for you know, my dear, what can I do with an awkward, raw, college cub? Though, upon second thoughts, that may'nt be too bad neither; for as I must have the fashioning of him, he may be easily moulded to one's mind.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Wilding, Madam.

M. Ga. Shew him in. [*Exit Servant.*] You need not go, my dear; we have no particular business.

M. God. I wonder now what she calls particular business.

Enter Old Wilding.

O. Wild. Ladies, your servant. I wait upon you, Madam, with a request from my son, that he may be permitted the honour of kissing your hand.

M. Gr. Your son is in town then?

O. Wild. He came last night, Ma'am; and though but just from the university I think I may venture to affirm, with as little the air of a pedant as——

M. Gr. I don't, Mr. Wilding, question the accomplishments of your son; and shall own too, that his being descended from the old friend of my father, is to me the strongest recommendation.

O. Wild. You honour me, Madam.

M. Gr. But, Sir, I have something to say—

O. Wild. Pray, Madam, speak out; it is impossible to be too explicit on these important occasions.

M. Gr. Why then, Sir, to a man of your wisdom and experience I need not observe, that the loss of a parent to counsel and direct at this solemn crisis, has made a greater degree of personal prudence necessary in me.

O. Wild. Perfectly right, Ma'am.

M. Gr. We live, Sir, in a very censorious world; a young woman can't be too much upon her guard; nor should I chuse to admit any man in the quality of a lover, if there was not at least a strong probability——

O. Wild. Of a more intimate connection. I hope, Madam,

Madam, you have heard nothing to the disadvantage of my son.

M. Gr. Not a syllable: but you know, Sir, there are such things in nature as unaccountable antipathies, aversions, that we take at first sight: I should be glad there could be no danger of that.

O. Wild. I understand you, Madam; you shall have all the satisfaction imaginable: Jack is to meet me immediately; I will conduct him under your window; and if his figure has the misfortune to displease, I will take care his addresses shall never offend you. Your most obedient servant. *[Exit.]*

M. Gr. Now there is a polite, sensible, old father for you.

M. God. Yes; and a very discreet, prudent daughter he is likely to have. Oh, you are a great hypocrite, Kitty.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A letter for you, Madam. *[To Miss Godfrey.]* Sir James Elliot to wait on your ladyship. *[To Miss Grantam.]* *[Exit.]*

M. Gr. Lord, I hope he won't stay long here. He comes, and seems entirely wrapt up in the dismal: what can be the matter now?

Enter Sir James Elliot.

Sir Ja. In passing by your door, I took the liberty, Ma'am, of enquiring after your health.

M. Gr. Very obliging. I hope, Sir, you receiv'd a favourable account.

Sir Ja. I did not know but you might have caught cold last night.

M. Gr. Cold! why Sir, I hope I did not sleep with my bed-chamber window open.

Sir Ja. Ma'am!

M. Gr. Sir!

Sir Ja. No, Ma'am; but it was rather hazardous to stay so late upon the water.

M. Gr. Upon the water!

Sir Ja.

Sir J
be own
M. G
Sir J
Wildin
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Sir Ja. Not but the variety of amusements, it must be own'd, were a sufficient temptation.

M. Gr. What can he be driving at now !

Sir Ja. And pray, Madam, what think you of young Wilding ? Is not he a gay, agreeable, sprightly——

M. Gr. I never give my opinion of people I don't know.

Sir Ja. You don't know him !

M. Gr. No.

Sir Ja. And his father I did not meet at your door !

M. Gr. Most likely you did.

Sir Ja. I am glad you own that, however ; but, for the son, you never——

M. Gr. Sat eyes upon him.

Sir Ja. Really ?

M. Gr. Really.

Sir Ja. Finely supported. Now, Madam, do you know that one of us is just going to make a very ridiculous figure ?

M. Gr. Sir, I never had the least doubt of your talents for excelling in that way.

Sir Ja. Ma'am, you do me honour ; but it does not happen to fall to my lot upon this occasion, however.

M. Gr. And that is a wonder !—What, then I am to be the fool of the comedy, I suppose.

Sir Ja. Admirably rally'd ! But I shall dash the spirit of that triumphant laugh.

M. Gr. I dare the attack. Come on, Sir.

Sir Ja. Know then, and blush, if you are not as lost to shame, as dead to decency, that I am no stranger to all last night's transactions.

M. Gr. Indeed !

Sir Ja. From your first entering the barge at Somerset-house, to your last landing at Whitehall.

M. Gr. Surprising !

Sir Ja. Cupids, collations, feasts, fireworks, all have reach'd me.

M. Gr. Why you deal in magic.

Sir Ja. My intelligence is as natural as it is infallible.

M. Gr. May I be indulg'd with the name of your informer.

Sir Ja. Freely, Madam. Only the very individual spark

spark to whose folly you were indebted for this gallant profusion.

M. Gr. But his name?

Sir Ja. Young Wilding.

M. Gr. You had this story from him?

Sir Ja. I had.

M. Gr. From Wilding!—That is amazing.

Sir Ja. Oh ho! what are you confounded at last; and no evasion to subterfuge, no——

M. Gr. Look ye, Sir James; what you can mean by this strange story, and very extraordinary behaviour, it is impossible for me to conceive; but if it is meant, as an artifice to palliate your infidelity to me, less pains would have answer'd your purpose.

Sir Ja. Oh, Madam, I know you are provided.

M. Gr. Matchless insolence! As you can't expect that I should be prodigiously pleas'd with the subject of this visit, you won't be surprized at my wishing it as short as possible.

Sir Ja. I don't wonder you feel pain at my presence; but you may rest secure you will have no interruption from me; and I really think it would be pity to part two people so exactly formed for each other. Your ladyship's servant. [*Going.*] But, Madam, though your sex secures you from any further resentment, yet the present object of your favour may have something to fear. [*Exit.*]

M. Gr. Very well. Now my dear I hope you will acknowledge the prudence of my plan. To what a pretty condition I must have been reduc'd if my hopes had rested upon one lover alone.

M. God. But are you sure that your method to multiply, may not be the means to reduce the number of your slaves?

M. Gr. Impossible!—Why can't you discern that this flam of Sir James Elliot's is a mere fetch to favour his retreat.

M. God. And you never saw Wilding?

M. Gr. Never.

M. God. There is some mystery in this. I have too
here

here in my hand another mortification that you must endure.

M. Gr. Of what kind?

M. God. A little ally'd to the last; it is from the military spark you met this morning.

M. Gr. What are the contents?

M. God. Only a formal declaration of love.

M. Gr. Why, you did not see him.

M. God. But it seems he did me.

M. Gr. Might I peruse it? ———“ Battles—no wounds so fatal—cannon-balls—Cupid—spring a mine—cruelty—die on a counterscarp—eyes—artillery—death the stranger.” It is address'd to you.

M. God. I told you so.

M. Gr. You will pardon me, my dear; but I really can't compliment you upon the supposition of a conquest at my expence.

M. God. That would be enough to make me vain; But why do you think it was so impossible?

M. Gr. And do you positively want a reason?

M. God. Positively.

M. Gr. Why then I shall refer you for an answer to a faithful counsellor and most accomplish'd critic.

M. God. Who may that be?

M. Gr. The mirror upon your toilette.

M. God. Perhaps you may differ in judgment.

M. Gr. Why can glasses flatter?

M. God. I can't say I think that necessary.

M. Gr. Saucy enough!—But come, child, don't let us quarrel upon so whimsical an occasion; time will explain the whole. You will favour me with your opinion of Young Wilding, at my window.

M. God. I attend you.

M. Gr. You will forgive me, my dear, the little hint I dropt; it was meant merely to serve you; for, indeed, child, there is no quality so insufferable in a young woman as self-conceit and vanity.

M. God. You are most prodigiously obliging.

M. Gr. I'll follow you, Miss. [*Exit Miss Godfrey.*] Pert thing!—She grows immoderately ugly. I always thought

thought her awkward, but now she is an absolute
fright.

M. God. [*within.*] Miss, Miss Grantam, your hero's
at hand.

M. Gr. I come.

M. God. As I live, the very individual stranger.

M. Gr. No, sure!—Oh Lord, let me have a peep.

M. God. It is he, it is he, it is he.

Enter Old Wilding, Young Wilding, and Papillion.

O. Wild. There, Marquis, you must pardon me; for though Paris be more compact, yet surely London covers a much greater quantity,—Oh, Jack, look at that corner house; how d'ye like it?

Y. Wild. Very well: but I don't see any thing extraordinary.

O. Wild. I wish though you were the master of what it contains.

T. Wild. What may that be, Sir?

O. Wild. The mistress, you rogue, you : a fine girl, and an immense fortune ; ay, and a prudent sensible wench into the bargain.

R. Wild. Time enough yet, Sir.

O. Wild. I don't see that: You are, lad, the last of our race, and I should be glad to see some probability of its continuance.

R. Wild. Suppose, Sir, you were to repeat your endeavours, you have cordially my consent.

O. Wild. No; rather too late in life for that experiment.

R. Wild. Why, Sir, would you recommend a condition to me, that you disapprove of yourself.

O. Wild. Why, Sirrah, I have done my duty to the public and my family, by producing you: now, Sir, it is incumbent on you to discharge your debt.

Y. Wild. In the college cant, I shall beg leave to tick a little longer.

O. Wild. Why then, to be serious, son, this is the very business I wanted to talk with you about. In a word,

word, I wish you married; and by providing the lady of that mansion for the purpose, I have proved myself both a father and a friend.

Y. Wild. Far be it from me to question your care; yet some preparation for so important a change——

O. Wild. Oh, I will allow you a week.

Y. Wild. A little more knowledge of the world.

O. Wild. That you may study at leisure.

Y. Wild. Now all Europe is in arms, my design was to serve my country abroad.

O. Wild. You will be full as useful to it by recruiting her subjects at home.

Y. Wild. You are then resolv'd.

O. Wild. Fix'd.

Y. Wild. Positively?

O. Wild. Peremptorily.

Y. Wild. No prayers——

O. Wild. Can move me.

Y. Wild. How the deuce shall I get out of this toil.

[*Aside.*] But suppose, Sir, there should be an unmountable objection?

O. Wild. Oh, leave the reconciling that to me; I am an excellent casuist.

Y. Wild. But I say, Sir, if it should be impossible to obey your commands?

O. Wild. Impossible!—I don't understand you.

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir!—But, on my knees, first let me crave your pardon.

O. Wild. Pardon! for what?

Y. Wild. I fear I have lost all title to your future favour.

O. Wild. Which way?

Y. Wild. I have done a deed——

O. Wild. Let us hear it.

Y. Wild. At Abington, in the county of Berks.

O. Wild. Well?

Y. Wild. I am——

O. Wild. What?

Y. Wild. Already married.

O. Wild. Married!

Pap. Married!

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. Married!

Y. Wild. And without my consent?

Y. Wild. Compell'd; fatally forc'd. Oh, Sir, did you but know all the circumstances of my sad, sad story, your rage would soon convert itself to pity.

Y. Wild. What an unlucky event!—But rise, and let me hear it all.

Y. Wild. The shame and confusion I now feel renders that talk at present impossible; I must therefore rely for the relation on the good offices of this faithful friend.

Pap. Me, Sir, I never heard one word of the matter.

Y. Wild. Come, Marquis, favour me with the particulars.

Pap. Upon my vard, Sire, dis affair has so shock me, that I am almost as incapable to tell de tale as your son.—[*To Young Wilding*] Dry your tears. What can I say, Sir?

Y. Wild. Any thing—Oh! [*seems to weep.*]

Pap. You see, Sire.

O. Wild. Your kind concern at the misfortune of my family calls for the most grateful acknowledgment.

Pap. Dis is great misfortunes, fans doute.

O. Wild. But if you, a stranger, are thus affected, what must a father feel?

Pap. Oh, beaucoup, great deal more.

O. Wild. But since the evil is without a remedy, let us know the worst at once. Well, Sir, at Abington.

Pap. Yes, at Abington.

O. Wild. In the county of Berks?

Pap. Dat is right, in the county of Berks.

Y. Wild. Oh, oh!

O. Wild. Ah, Jack, Jack! are all my hopes then—
Though I dread to ask, yet it must be known; who is the girl, pray Sir?

Pap. De girl, Sir—[*Aside to Young Wilding*] Who shall I say?

Y. Wild. Any body.

Pap. For the girl, I can't say upon my vard.

O. Wild. Her condition?

Pap. Pas grande condition; dat is to be sure. But
dere

dere is no help,—(*Aside to young Wilding.*) Sir, I am quite aground.

O. Wild. Yes, I read my thame in his reserve ; some artful huffy !

Pap. Dat may be. Vat you call huffy ?

O. Wild. Or perhaps some common creature ! But I'm prepar'd to hear the worst.

Pap. Have you no mercy ?

Y. Wild. I'll step to your relief, Sir.

Pap. O Lord ! a happy deliverance.

Y. Wild. Though it is almost death for me to speak, yet it would be infamous to let the reputation of the lady suffer by my silence ; She is, Sir, of an ancient house and unlemish'd character.

O. Wild. That is something.

Y. Wild. And though her fortune may not be equal to the warm wishes of a fond father, yet——

O. Wild. Her name ?

Y. Wild. Miss Lydia Sybthrop.

O. Wild. Sybthrop.—I never heard of the name.—But proceed.

Y. Wild. The latter end of last long vacation, I went with Sir James Elliot to pass a few days at a new purchase of his near Abington. There at an assembly it was my chance to meet and dance with this lady.

O. Wild. Is she handsome ?

Y. Wild. Oh, Sir, more beautiful——

O. Wild. Nay, no raptures ; but go on.

Y. Wild. But to her beauty she adds politeness, affability, and discretion ; unless she forfeited that character by fixing her affection on me.

O. Wild. Modestly observed.

Y. Wild. I was deterr'd from a public declaration of my passion, dreading the scantiness of her fortune would prove an objection to you. Some private interviews she permitted.

O. Wild. Was that so decent ?—But love and prudence, madness and reason.

Y. Wild. One fatal evening, the twentieth of September, if I mistake not, we were in a retir'd room, innocently exchanging mutual vows, when her father, whom

whom we expected to sup abroad, came suddenly upon us. I had just time to conceal myself in a closet.

O. Wild. What, unobserved by him?

Y. Wild. Entirely. But, as my ill-stars would have it, a cat, of whom my wife is vastly fond, had a few days before lodged a litter of kittens in the same place: I unappily trod upon one of the brood, which so provok'd the implackable mother, that she flew at me with the fury of a tiger.

O. Wild. I have observ'd those creatures very fierce in defence of their young.

Pap. I shall hate a cat as long as I live.

Y. Wild. The noise rous'd the old gentleman's attention; he open'd the door and there discover'd your son.

Pap. Unlucky.

Y. Wild. I rush'd to the door; but fatally my foot slipt at the top of the stairs, and down I came tumbling to the bottom; the pistol in my hand went off by accident; this alarm'd her three brothers in the parlour, who, with all their servants, rush'd with united force upon me.

O. Wild. And so surpriz'd you?

Y. Wild. No, Sir; with my sword I for some time made a gallant defence, and should have inevitably escap'd, but a raw-bon'd, over-grown, clumsy cook-wench, struck at my sword with a kitchen poker, broke it in two, and compell'd me to surrender at discretion: the consequence of which is obvious enough.

O. Wild. Natural. The lady's reputation, your condition, her beauty, your love, all combin'd to make marriage an unavoidable measure.

Y. Wild. May I hope then you rather think me unfortunate than culpable?

O. Wild. Why your situation is a sufficient excuse; all I blame you for is your keeping it a secret from me. With Miss Grantam I shall make an awkward figure; but the best apology is the truth; I'll hasten to explain it to her all——— Oh, Jack, Jack, this is a mortifying business.

Y. Wild. Most melancholy.

[Exit Old Wilding.

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Pap.

Y. W.

Pap. I am amaz'd, Sir, that you have so carefully conceal'd this transaction from me.

Y. Wild. Heyday! what, do you believe it too?

Pap. Believe it! Why is not the story of the marriage true?

Y. Wild. Not a syllable.

Pap. And the cat, and the pistol, and the poker.—

Y. Wild. All invention. And were you really taken in?

Pap. Lord, Sir, how was it possible to avoid it? Mercy on us! what a collection of circumstances have you crowded together!

Y. Wild. Genius; the mere effects of genius, Papillion. But to deceive you, who so thoroughly know me!

Pap. But to prevent that for the future, could you not just give your humble servant a hint, when you are bent upon bouncing. Besides, Sir, if you recollect your fix'd resolution to reform——

Y. Wild. Ay, as to matter of fancy, the mere sport and frolic of invention: but in case of necessity—why, Miss Godfrey was at stake, and I was forc'd to use all my finesse.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Two letters, Sir.

[Exit.

Pap. There are two things in my conscience my master will never want: a prompt lie, and a ready excuse for telling of it.

Y. Wild. Hum! business begins to thicken upon us: a challenge from Sir James Elliot, and a rendezvous from the pretty Miss Godfrey. They shall both be observ'd, but in their order; therefore the lady first. Let me see—I have not been twenty hours in town, and I have already got a challenge, a mistress, and a wife; now if I can but get engaged in a chancery suit, I shall have my hands pretty full of employment. Come, Papillion, we have no time to be idle.

[Exeunt.

END of the SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

Miss GRANTAM and Miss GODFREY.

• *Miss Godfrey.*

UPON my word, Miss Grantam, this is but an idle piece of curiosity : you know the man is already dispos'd of and therefore——

M. Gr. That is true, my dear ; but there is in this affair some mystery that I must and will have explain'd.

M. God. Come, come, I know the grievance. You can't brook that this spark, though even a married man, should throw off his allegiance to you, and enter a volunteer in my service.

M. Gr. And so you take the fact for granted ?

M. God. Have I not his letter ?

M. Gr. Conceited creature ! I fancy, Miss, by your vast affection for this letter, it is the first of the kind you have ever receiv'd.

M. God. Nay, my dear, why should you be piqu'd at me ? the fault is none of mine ; I dropt no handkerchief ; I threw out no lure ; the bird came willingly to hand, you know.

M. Gr. Metaphorical too ! what, you are setting up for a wit as well as a belle ! why really, Madam, to do you justice, you have full as fine pretensions to one as the other.

M. God. I fancy, Madam, the world will not form their judgment of either from the report of a disappointed rival.

M. Gr. Rival ! admirably rally'd !—But, let me tell you, Madam, this sort of behaviour, Madam, at your own house, whatever may be your beauty, is no great proof of your breeding, Madam.

M. God. As to that, Ma'am, I hope, I shall always shew a proper resentment to any insult that is offer'd me, let it be in whose house it will. The assignation, Ma'am, both time and place, was of your own contriving.

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M. Gr. Mighty well, Ma'am !

M. God. But if, dreading a mortification, you think proper to alter your plan, your chair, I believe is in waiting.

M. Gr. It is, Madam ! then let it wait—Oh, what, that was your scheme ! but it won't take, Miss : the contrivance it a little too shallow.

M. God. I don't understand you.

M. Gr. Cunning creature ! So all this insolence was concerted, it seems ; a plot to drive my out of the house, that you might have the fellow all to yourself : But I have a regard for your character, though you neglect it, Fie, Miss ! a passion for a married man ! I really blush for you.

M. God. And I most sincerely pity you. But curb your choler a little ; the enquiry you are about to make requires rather a cooler disposition of mind ; and by this time the hero is at hand.

M. Gr. Mighty well ; I am prepar'd. But, Miss Godfrey, if you really wish to be acquitted of all artificial underhand dealings, in this affair, suffer me in your name to manage the interview.

M. God. Most willingly. But he will recollect your voice.

M. Gr. Oh, that is easily alter'd. [*Enter a Maid, who whispers Miss Grantam, and retires.*] It is he, but hide yourself, Miss, if you please.

M. God. Your hood a little forwarder, Miss ; you may be known, and then we shall have the language of politeness inflam'd to proofs of a violent passion.

M. Gr. You are prodigiously cautious.

Enter Young Wilding.

Y. Wild. This rendezvous is something in the Spanish taste, imported, I suppose, with the guitar. At present, I presume, the custom is confin'd to the great ; but it will descend, and in a couple of months I shall not be surpriz'd to hear an attorney's hackney clerk rousing at midnight, a millener's 'prentice, with an, "Ally, Ally Croker." But that, if I mistake not, is the temple ;

and see my Goodess herself. Miss Godfrey.

M. Gr. Hush !

Y. Wild. Am I right, Miss ?

M. Gr. Softly. You receiv'd my letter, I see, Sir.

Y. Wild. And flew to the appointment with more—

M. Gr. No raptures, I beg. But you must not suppose this meeting meant to encourage your hopes.

Y. Wild. How, Madam !

M. Gr. Oh, by no means, Sir ; for tho' I own your figure is pleasing, and your conversation—

M. God. Hold, Miss ; when did I ever converse with him ?

M. Gr. Why, did not you see him in the park ?

M. God. True, Madam ; but the conversation was with you.

M. Gr. Bless me ! you are very difficult, I say, Sir, though your person may be unexceptionable, yet your character—

Y. Wild. My character !

M. Gr. Come, come, you are better known than you imagine.

Y. Wild. I hope not.

M. Gr. Your name is Wilding.

Y. Wild. How the duce came she by that ! True, Madam.

M. Gr. Pray have you never heard of a Miss Grantam ?

Y. Wild. Frequently.

M. Gr. You have. And had you never any favourable thoughts of that lady ? Now mind Miss.

Y. Wild. If you mean as a lover, never. The lady did me the honour to have a small design upon me.

M. God. I hear every word, Miss.

M. Gr. But you need not lean so heavy upon me ; he speaks loud enough to be heard—I have been told, Sir, that—

Y. Wild. Yes, Ma'am, and very likely by the lady herself.

M. Gr. Sir !

Y. Wild. Oh, Madam, I have another obligation in my pocket to Miss Grantam, which must be discharg'd in the morning.

M. Gr.

M. Gr. Of what kind ?

Y. Wild. Why the lady, finding an old humble servant of hers a little lethargic, has thought fit to administer me in a jealous draught, in order to quicken his passion.

M. Gr. Sir, let me tell you——

M. God. Have a care ; you will betray yourself.

Y. Wild. Oh, the whole story will afford you infinite diversion : such a farago of fights and feasts. But, upon my honour, the girl has a fertile invention.

M. God. So ! what that story was yours was it ?

Y. Wild. Pray, Madam, don't I hear another voice ?

M. Gr. A distant relation of mine.——Every syllable false.—But, Sir, we have another charge against you. Do you know any thing of a lady at Abington ?

Y. Wild. Miss Grantam again. Yes, Madam, I have some knowledge of that lady.

M. Gr. You have ! Well, Sir, and that being the case, how could you have the assurance——

Y. Wild. A moment's patience, Ma'am. That lady, that Berkshire lady, will, I can assure you, prove no bar to my hopes.

M. Gr. How, Sir, no bar ?

Y. Wild. Not in the least, Ma'am ; for that lady exists in idea only.

M. Gr. No such person.

Y. Wild. A meer creature of the imagination.

M. Gr. Indeed ?

Y. Wild. The attacks of Miss Grantam were so powerfully enforc'd too by paternal authority, that I had no method of avoiding the blow, but by the sheltering myself under the conjugal shield.

M. Gr. You are not married then ?——But what credit can I give to the professions of a man, who, in an article of such importance, and to a person of such respect——

Y. Wild. Nay, Madam, surely Miss Godfrey should not accuse me of a crime her own charms have occasion'd. Could any other motive but the fear of losing her, prevail on me to trifle with a father, or compel me to infringe those laws which I have hitherto so unavoidably observ'd ?

M. Gr. What laws, Sir?

Y. Wild. The sacred laws of truth, Ma'am.

M. Gr. There, indeed, you did yourself an infinite violence. But when the whole of the affair is discover'd, will it be so easy to get rid of Miss Grantam? the violence of her passion, and the old gentleman's obstinacy—

Y. Wild. Are nothing to a mind resolv'd.

M. Gr. Poor Miss Grantam!

Y. Wild. Do you know her, Madam?

M. Gr. I have heard of her: but you, Sir, I suppose have been long on an intimate footing?

Y. Wild. Bred up together from children.

M. Gr. Brave!—Is she handsome?

Y. Wild. Her paint comes from Paris, and her femme de chambre is an excellent artist.

M. Gr. Very well!—Her shape?

Y. Wild. Pray, Madam, is not Curzon esteemed the best stay-maker for people inclin'd to be crooked?

M. Gr. But as to the qualities of her mind: for instance, her understanding?

Y. Wild. Uncultivated.

M. Gr. Her wit?

Y. Wild. Borrow'd.

M. Gr. Her taste?

Y. Wild. Trifling.

M. Gr. And her temper.

Y. Wild. Intolerable.

M. Gr. A finish'd picture. But come these are not your real thoughts; this is a sacrifice you think due to the vanity of our sex.

Y. Wild. My honest sentiments: and to convince you how thoroughly indifferent I am to that lady, I would, upon my veracity, as soon take a wife from the Grand Signior's seraglio.—Now, Ma'am, I hope you are satisfy'd.

M. Gr. And you would not scruple to acknowledge this before the lady's face?

Y. Wild. The first opportunity.

M. Gr. That I will take care to provide you. Dare you meet me at her house?

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. When will you be ready?

M. Gr. In half an hour.

Y. Wild. But won't a declaration of this sort appear odd at—a—

M. Gr. Come, no evasion; your conduct and character seem to me a little equivocal, and I must insist on this proof, at least of—

Y. Wild. You shall have it.

M. Gr. In half an hour.

Y. Wild. This instant.

M. Gr. Be punctual.

Y. Wild. Or may I forfeit your favour.

M. Gr. Very well: till then, Sir, adieu.—Now I think I have my spark in the toil; and if the fellow has any feeling, if I don't make him smart for every article—Come, my dear, I shall stand in need of your aid.

[*Exeunt.*]

Y. Wild. So! I am now, I think, arriv'd at a critical period. If I can but weather this point—But why should I doubt it? it is in the day of distress only that a great man displays his abilities. But I shall want Papillion: where can the puppy be?

Enter Papillion.

Y. Wild. So, Sir; where have you been rambling?

Pap. I did not suppose you would want—

Y. Wild. Want!—you are always out of the way; Here have I been forc'd to tell forty lies upon my own credit, and not a single soul to vouch for the truth of them.

Pap. Lord, Sir, you know—

Y. Wild. Don't plague me with your apologies; but it is lucky for you that I want your assistance. Come with me to Miss Grantam's.

Pap. On what occasion?

Y. Wild. An important one; but I'll prepare you as we walk.

Pap. Sir, I am really—I could wish you would be so good as to—

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Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. What, desert your friend in the heat of battle! oh, you poltroon!

Pap. Sir, I would do any thing, but you know I have not talents.

Y. Wild. I do; and for my own sake shall not task them too high.

Pap. Now I suppose the hour is come when we shall pay for all.

Y. Wild. Why, what a dastardly, hen-hearted— But come, Papillion, this shall be your last campaign. Don't droop, man; confide in your leader, and remember, Sub auspice Teucro nil desperandum. [Exeunt.]

SCENE, A ROOM.

Enter a Servant conducting in Old Wilding.

Serv. My lady, Sir, will be at home immediately. Sir James Elliot is in the next room waiting her return.

O. Wild. Pray, honest friend, will you tell Sir James that I beg the favour of a word with him. [Exit Servant.] This unthinking boy! Half the purpose of my life has been to plan this scheme for his happiness, and in one heedless hour has he mangled all.

Enter Sir James Elliot.

Sir, I ask your pardon; but upon so interesting a subject, I know you will excuse my intrusion. Pray, Sir, of what credit is the family of the Sybthorpes in Berkshire?

Sir Ja. Sir!

Y. Wild. I don't mean as to property; that I am not so solicitous about; but as to their character: Do they live in reputation? Are they respected in the neighbourhood?

Sir Ja. The family of the Sybthorpes!

O. Wild. Of the Sybthorpes.

Sir Ja. Really I don't know, Sir.

O. Wild. Not know!

Sir Ja. No; it is the very first time I ever heard of the name.

O. Wild. How steadily he denies it! Well done, baronet! I find Jack's account was a just one. [Aside.]

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Pray, Sir James, recollect yourself.

Sir Ja. It will be to no purpose.

O Wild. Come, Sir, your motive for this affected ignorance is a generous, but unnecessary proof of your friendship for my son: but I know the whole affair.

Sir Ja. What affair?

O Wild. Jack's marriage.

Sir Ja. What Jack?

O Wild. My son Jack.

Sir Ja. Is he marry'd?

O Wild. Is he marry'd! why you know he is.

Sir Ja. Not I, upon my honour.

O Wild. Nay, that is going a little too far: but to remove of all your scruples at once, he has own'd it himself.

Sir Ja. He has.

O Wild. Ay, ay, to me. Every circumstance: going to your new purchase at Abington—meeting Lydia Sybthorp at the assembly—their private interviews—surpriz'd by the father—pistol—poker—and marriage; in short, every particular.

Sir Ja. And this account you had from your son?

O Wild. From Jack; not two hours ago.

Sir Ja. I wish you joy, Sir.

O Wild. Not much of that, I believe.

Sir Ja. Why, Sir, does the marriage displease you?

O Wild. Doubtless.

Sir Ja. Then I fancy you may make yourself easy.

O Wild. Why so?

Sir Ja. You have got, Sir, the most prudent daughter-in-law in the British dominions.

O Wild. I am happy to hear it.

Sir Ja. For though she mayn't have brought you much, I'm sure she'll not cost you a farthing.

O Wild. Ay; exactly Jack's account.

Sir Ja. She'll be easily jointur'd.

O Wild. Justice shall be done her.

Sir Ja. No provision necessary for younger children.

O Wild. No Sir! why not?—I can tell you, if she answers your account, not the daughter of a duke—

Sir Ja. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

O. Wild. You are merry, Sir.

Sir Ja. What an unaccountable fellow!

O. Wild. Sir!

Sir Ja. I beg your pardon, Sir. But with regard to this marriage——

O. Wild. Well, Sir.

Sir Ja. I take the whole history to be neither more or less than absolute fable.

O. Wild. How, Sir!

Sir Ja. Even so.

O. Wild. Why, Sir, do you think my son would dare to impose upon me?

Sir Ja. Sir, he would dare to impose upon any body. Don't I know him?

O. Wild. What do you know?

Sir Ja. I know, Sir, that his narratives gain him more applause than credit; and that, whether from constitution or habit, there is no believing a syllable he says.

O. Wild. Oh, mighty well, Sir!—He wants to turn the tables upon Jack.—But it won't do; you are forestall'd; your novels won't pass upon me.

Sir Ja. Sir!

O. Wild. Nor is the character of my son to be blasted with the breath of a bouncer.

Sir Ja. What is this?

O. Wild. No, no, Mr. Mandeville, it won't do; you are as well known here as in your own county of Hereford.

Sir Ja. Mr. Wilding, but that I am sure this extravagant behaviour owes its rise to some impudent impositions of your son, your age would scarce prove your protection.

O. Wild. Nor, Sir, but that I know my boy equal to the defence of his own honour, should he want a protector in this arm, wither'd and impotent as you may think it.

Enter Miss Grantam.

M. Gr. Bless me, Gentlemen, what is the meaning of this?

Sir Ja.

Sir Ja. No more at present, Sir; I have another demand upon your son; we'll settle the whole together.

O. Wild. I am sure he will do you justice.

M. Gr. How, Sir James Elliot, I flatter'd myself that you had finish'd your visits here, Sir. Must I be the eternal object of your outrage? not only insulted in my own person, but in that of my friends! Pray, Sir, what right—

O. Wild. Madam, I ask your pardon; a disagreeable occasion brought me here: I come, Madam, to renounce all hopes of being nearer ally'd to you, my son unfortunately being marry'd already.

M. Gr. Marry'd!

Sir Ja. Yes, Madam, to a lady in the clouds; and because I have refus'd to acknowledge her family, this old gentleman has behav'd in a manner very inconsistent with his usual politeness.

O. Wild. Sir, I thought this affair was to be reserv'd for another occasion; but you, it seems—

M. Gr. Oh, is that the business?—Why, I begin to be afraid that we are here a little in the wrong, Mr. Wilding.

O. Wild. Madam!

M. Gr. Your son has just confirm'd Sir James Elliot's opinion, at a conference under Miss Godfrey's window.

O. Wild. Is it possible?

M. Gr. Most true; and assign'd two most whimsical motives for the unaccountable tale.

O. Wild. What can they be?

M. Gr. An aversion for me, whom he has seen but once, and an affection for Miss Godfrey, whom I am almost sure he never saw in his life.

O. Wild. You amaze me!

M. Gr. Indeed, Mr. Wilding, your son is a most extraordinary youth; he hath finely peplex'd us all. I think, Sir James, you have a small obligation to him.

Sir Ja. Which I shall take care to acknowledge the first opportunity.

O. Wild. You have my consent. An abandoned profligate! was his father a proper subject for his—But I discard him.

M. Gr.

M. Gr. Nay, now, Gentlemen, you are rather too warm: I can't think Mr. Wilding bad-hearted at the bottom. This is a levity——

O. Wild. How, Madam! a levity!

M. Gr. Take my word for it, no more; enflam'd into habit by the approbation of his juvenile friends. Will you submit his punishment to me? I think I have the means in my hands, both to satisfy your resentments, and accomplish his cure into the bargain.

Sir Ja. I have no quarrel to him, but for the ill offices he has done me with you.

M. Gr. D'ye hear, Mr. Wilding? I am afraid my opinion with Sir James must cement the general peace.

O. Wild. Madam, I submit to any——

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Mr. Wilding to wait upon you, Madam. [*Exit.*]

M. Gr. He is punctual, I find. Come, good folks, you all act under my direction. You, Sir, will get from your son, by what means you think fit, the real truth of the Abington business. You must likewise seemingly consent to his marriage with Miss Godfrey, who I shrewdly suspect he has by some odd accident mistaken for me: the lady herself shall appear at your call.—— Come, Sir James, you will withdraw. I intend to produce another performer, who will want a little instruction. Kitty.

Enter Kitty.

Let John shew Mr. Wilding in to his father; then come to my dressing room: I have a short scene to give you in study. [*Exit Kitty.*] The girl is lively, and, I warrant, will do her character justice. Come, Sir James, Nay, no ceremony; we must be as busy as bees.

[*Exeunt.*]

O. Wild. This strange boy!—But I must command my temper.

Y. Wild. [*speaking as he enters.*] People to speak with me! See what they want, Papillion,—My father here! that's unlucky enough.

O. Wild.

O. Wild. Ha, Jack! what brings you here?

Y. Wild. Why, a thought it my duty to wait upon Miss Grantam, in order to make her some apology for the late unfortunate——

O. Wild. Well now, that is prudently, as well as politely done.

Y. Wild. I am happy to meet, Sir, with your approbation.

O. Wild. I have been thinking, Jack, about my daughter-in-law; as the affair is public, it is not decent to let her continue longer at her father's.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. Would it not be right to send for her home?

Y. Wild. Doubtless, Sir.

O. Wild. I think so. Why then to-morrow my chariot shall fetch her.

Y. Wild. The devil it shall! [*Aside.*] Not quite so soon, if you please, sir.

O. Wild. No! why not?

Y. Wild. The journey may be dangerous in her present condition.

O. Wild. What's the matter with her?

Y. Wild. She is big with child, sir.

O. Wild. An audacious——Big with child! that is fortunate. But, however, an easy carriage, and short stages can't hurt her.

Y. Wild. Pardon me, sir, I dare not trust her: she is six months gone.

O. Wild. Nay, then, there may be danger indeed. But should not I write to her father, just to let him know that you have discovered the secret.

Y. Wild. By all means, sir, it will make him extremely happy.

O. Wild. Why then I will instantly about it. Pray how do you direct to him?

Y. Wild. Abington, Berkshire.

O. Wild. True; but his address?

Y. Wild. You need not trouble yourself, sir; I shall write by this post to my wife, and will send your letter inclos'd.

O. Wild. Ay, ay, that will do. [*going.*]

Y. Wild.

Y. Wild. So, I have parry'd that thrust.

O. Wild. Tho', upon second thoughts, Jack, that will rather look too familiar for an introductory letter.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. And these country gentlemen are full of punctilios—No, I'll send him a letter apart; so give me his direction.

Y. Wild. You have it, sir.

O. Wild. Ay, but his name: I have been so hurry'd that I have entirely forgot it.

Y. Wild. I am sure so have I. [*Aside.*] His name—his name, sir,—Hopkins.

O. Wild. Hopkins!

Y. Wild. Yes, sir.

O. Wild. That is not the same name that you gave me before: that, if I recollect, was either Syphthroe, or Sybthroe.

Y. Wild. You are right, sir; that is his paternal appellation; but the name of Hopkins he took for an estate of his mother's; so he is indiscriminately called Hopkins or Sybthroe; and now I recollect I have his letter in my pocket—he signs himself Sybthroe Hopkins.

O. Wild. There is no end of this: I must stop him at once. Harkye, sir, I think you are call'd my son.

Y. Wild. I hope, sir, you have no reason to doubt it.

O. Wild. And look upon yourself as a gentleman?

Y. Wild. In having the honour of descending from you.

O. Wild. And that you think a sufficient pretension?

Y. Wild. Sir—pray, sir—

O. Wild. And by what means do you imagine your ancestors obtain'd that distinguishing title?—By their pre-eminence in virtue, I suppose.

Y. Wild. Doubtless, sir.

O. Wild. And has it never occur'd to you, that what was gain'd by honour might be lost by infamy?

Y. Wild. Perfectly, sir.

O. Wild. Are you to learn what redress even the imputation of a lye demands, and that nothing less than the life of the adversary can extinguish the affront.

Y. Wild. Doubtless, sir.

O. Wild.

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O. Wild. Then how dare you call yourself a gentleman! you, whose whole life has been one continued scene of fraud and falsity! And would nothing content you but making me a partner in your infamy? not satisfied with violating that great band of society, mutual confidence, the most sacred rights of nature must be invaded, and your father made the innocent instrument to circulate your abominable impositions!

Y. Wild. But, Sir!

O. Wild. Within this hour my life was near sacrific'd in defence of your fame: But perhaps that was your intention, and the story of your marriage merely calculated to send me out of the world, as a grateful return for my bringing you into it.

Y. Wild. For heaven's sake, Sir.

O. Wild. What other motive?

Y. Wild. Hear me, I intreat you, Sir.

O. Wild. To be again impos'd on! no, Jack, my eyes are open'd at last.

Y. Wild. By all that's sacred, Sir——

O. Wild. I am now deaf to your delusions.

Y. Wild. But hear me, Sir. I own the Abington business——

O. Wild. An absolute fiction?

Y. Wild. I do.

O. Wild. And how dare you——

Y. Wild. I crave but a moment's audience.

O. Wild. Go on.

Y. Wild. Previous to the communication of your intention for me, I accidentally met with a lady whose charms——

O. Wild. So! what here's another marriage trumped out: but that is a stale device. And pray, Sir, what place does this lady inhabit? Come, come, go on; you have a fertile invention, and this is a fine opportunity. Well, Sir, and this charming lady, residing, I suppose, in Nubibus——

Y. Wild. No, Sir; in London.

O. Wild. Indeed.

Y. Wild. Nay, more, and at this instant in this house.

O. Wild.

O. Wild. And her name——

Y. Wild. Godfrey.

O. Wild. The friend of Miss Grantam?

Y. Wild. The very same, Sir.

O. Wild. Have you spoke to her?

Y. Wild. Parted from her not ten minutes ago, nay, am here by her appointment.

O. Wild. Has she favour'd your address?

Y. Wild. Time, sir, and your approbation, will I hope.

O. Wild. Look ye, Sir; as there is some little probability in this story, I shall think it worth farther enquiry. To be plain with you, I know Miss Godfrey; am intimate with her family; and though you deserve but little from me, I will endeavour to aid your intention. But if in the progress of this affair, you practise any of your usual arts; if I discover the least falshood, the least duplicity, remember you have lost a father.

Y. Wild. I shall submit without a murmur.

[Exit Old Wilding.

Enter Papillion.

Y. Wild. Well, Papillion.

Pap. Sir, here has been the devil to pay within.

Y. Wild. What's the matter?

Pap. A whole legion of cooks, confectioners, musicians, waiters, and watermen.

Y. Wild. What do they want?

Pap. You, Sir.

Y. Wild. Me!

Pap. Yes, Sir; they have brought in their bills.

Y. Wild. Bills! for what?

Pap. For the entertainment you gave last night on the water.

Y. Wild. That I gave!

Pap. Yes, Sir! you remember the bill of fare: I am sure the very mention of it makes my mouth water.

Y. Wild. Prithee, are you mad? There must be some mistake; you know that I——

Pap. They have been vastly puzzled to find out your lodgings; but Mr. Robinson meeting by accident with Sir James Elliot, he was kind enough to tell him where you liv'd. Here are the bills; Almack's, twelve dozen

of

of claret, ditto Champagne, Frontiniac, sweetmeats, pine-apples; the whole amount is 372l. 9s. besides music and fireworks.

Y. Wild. Come, Sir, this is no time for trifling.

Pap. Nay, Sir, they say they have gone full as low as they can afford; and they were in hopes, from the great satisfaction you express'd to Sir James Elliot, that you would throw them in an additional compliment.

Y. Wild. Hark ye, Mr. Papillion, if you don't cease your impertinence, I shall pay you a compliment that you would gladly excuse.

Pap. Upon my faith I relate but the mere matter of fact. You know, Sir, I am but bad at invention; tho' this incident I can't help thinking is the natural fruit of your happy one.

Y. Wild. But are you serious? Is this possible?

Pap. Most certain. It was with difficulty I restrain'd their impatience; but however I have dispatch'd them to your lodgings, with a promise that you shall immediately meet them.

Y. Wild. Oh, there we shall soon rid our hands of the troop.—Now, Papillion, I have news for you. My father has got to the bottom of the whole Abington business.

Pap. The deuce!

Y. Wild. We parted this moment. Such a scene!

Pap. And what was the issue?

Y. Wild. Happy beyond my hopes. Not only an act of oblivion, but a promise to plead my cause with the fair.

Pap. With Miss Godfréy?

Y. Wild. Who else?—He is now with her in another room.

Pap. And is there no—you understand me—in all this?

Y. Wild. No, no; that is all over now—my reformation is fix'd.

Pap. As a weather-cock.

Y. Wild. Here comes my father.

Enter

Enter Old Wilding.

O. Wild. Well, Sir, I find in this last article you have condescended to tell me the truth: the young lady is not averse to your union; but in order to fix so mutable a mind, I have drawn up a slight contract, which you are both to sign.

Y. Wild. With transport.

O. Wild. I will introduce Miss Godfrey. *[Exit.]*

Y. Wild. Did not I tell you, Papillion?

Pap. This is amazing, indeed.

Y. Wild. Am I not a happy fortunate?—But they come.

Enter Old Wilding, and Miss Godfrey.

O. Wild. If, Madam, he has not the highest sense of the great honour you do him, I shall cease to regard him.—There, Sir, make your own acknowledgments to that lady.

Y. Wild. Sir!

O. Wild. This is more than you merit; but let your future behaviour testify your gratitude.

Y. Wild. Papillion! Madam! Sir!

O. Wild. What is the puppy petrified! Why don't you go up to the lady?

Y. Wild. Up to the lady!—That lady!

O. Wild. That lady!—To be sure. What other lady?—To Miss Godfrey!

Y. Wild. That lady Miss Godfrey!

O. Wild. What is all this? Harkye, Sir: I see what you are at: But no trifling; I'll be no more the dupe of your double detestable—Recollect my last resolution: this instant your hand to the contract, or tremble at the consequence.

Y. Wild. Sir, that I hope is—might not I—to be sure—

O. Wild. No further evasions! There, Sir.

Y. Wild. Heigh ho. *[Signs it.]*

O. Wild. Very well. Now, Madam, your name if you please.

Y. Wild.

Y. W.
Pap.
Y. W.

Serv.
Y. W.
M. C.
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Y. Wild. Papillion, do you know who she is?

Pap. That's a question indeed! Don't you, Sir?

Y. Wild. Not I, as I hope to be fav'd.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A young lady begs to speak with Mr. Wilding.

Y. Wild. With me!

M. God. A young lady with Mr. Wilding!

Serv. Seems distress'd, Madam, and extremely pressing for admittance.

M. God. Indeed! There may be something in this! You must permit me, Sir, to pause a little: who knows but a prior claim may prevent—

O. Wild. How, Sir, who is this lady?

Y. Wild. It is impossible for me to divine, Sir.

O. Wild. You know nothing of her?

Y. Wild. How should I?

O. Wild. You hear, Madam.

M. God. I presume your son can have no objection to the lady's appearance.

Y. Wild. Not in the least, Madam.

M. God. Shew her in, John.

[*Exit.*

O. Wild. No, Madam, I don't think there is the least room for suspecting him; he can't be so abandon'd as to——But she is here. Upon my word a mighty woman.

Enter Kitty as Miss Sybthorpe.

Kitty. Where is he?—Oh, let me throw my arms—my life, my——

Y. Wild. Heyday!

Kitty. And could you leave me? and for so long a space? Think how the tedious time has lagg'd along.

Y. Wild. Madam!

Kitty. But we are met at last, and now will part no more.

Y. Wild. The deuce we won't!

Kitty. What, not one kind look, no tender word to hail our second meeting!

Y. Wild. What the devil is all this?

Kitty.

Kitty. Are all your oaths, your protestations, come to this? Have I deserv'd such treatment? Quitted my father's house, left all my friends, and wander'd here alone in search of thee, thou first, last, only object of my love.

O. Wild. To what can all this tend? Harkye, Sir, unriddle this mystery.

Y. Wild. Davus, non Oedipus sum. It is beyond me, I confess. Some lunatic escap'd from her keeper, I suppose.

Kitty. Am I disown'd then, contemn'd, slighted?

O. Wild. Hold; let me enquire into this matter a little. Pray, Madam——You seem to be pretty familiar here—Do you know this gentleman?

Kitty. Too well.

O. Wild. His name?

Kitty. Wilding.

O. Wild. So far she is right. Now yours, if you please.

Kitty. Wilding!

Omnes. Wilding.

O. Wild. And how came you by that name pray?

Kitty. Most lawfully, Sir: By the sacred band, the holy tie that made us one.

O. Wild. What, marry'd to him!

Kitty. Most true.

Omnes. How!

Y. Wild. Sir, may I never—

O. Wild. Peace, Monster!——One question more: Your maiden name?

Kitty. Sybthorpe.

O. Wild. Lydia, from Abington, in the county of Berks?

Kitty. The same.

O. Wild. As I suspected. So then the whole story is true, and the monster is marry'd at last.

Y. Wild. Me, Sir! By all that's—

O. Wild. Eternal dumbness seize thee, measureless liar!

Y. Wild. If not me, hear this gentlemen——Marquis——

Pap.

Pap. Not I; I'll be drawn into none of your scrapes; it is a pit of your digging, and so get out as well as you can. Mean time I'll shift for myself. *[Exit.]*

O. Wild. What evasion now, Monster?

M. God. Deceiver!

O. Wild. Lyar!

M. God. Impostor!

T. Wild. Why, this is a general combination to distract me; but I will be heard. Sir, you are grossly imposed upon: the low contriver of this woman's shallow artifice I shall soon find means to discover; and as to you, Madam, with whom I have been suddenly surpriz'd into a contract, I most solemnly declare this is the first time I ever sat eyes on you.

O. Wild. Amazing confidence! Did not I bring her at your own request?

T. Wild. No.

M. God. Is not this your own letter?

T. Wild. No.

Kitty. Am not I your wife?

T. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Did not you own it to me?

T. Wild. Yes—that is—no, no.

Kitty. Hear me.

T. Wild. No.

M. God. Answer me.

T. Wild. No.

O. Wild. Have not I——

T. Wild. No, no, no. Zounds you are all mad, and if I stay I shall catch the infection. *[Exit.]*

Enter Sir James Elliot, and Miss Grantam.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

M. Gr. Finely perform'd.

O. Wild. You have kept your promise, and I thank you, Madam.

M. Gr. My medicine was somewhat rough, Sir; but in desperate cases, you know——

O. Wild. If this cure is compleated, he will gratefully acknowledge the cause: if not, the punishment comes far

far short of his crimes. It is needless to pay you any compliments, Sir James; with that lady you cannot fail to be happy. I shan't venture to hint a scheme I have greatly at heart, till we have undeniable proofs of the success of our operations. To the ladies, indeed, no character is so dangerous as that of a lyar.

They in the fairest fames can fix a flaw,
And vanquish females whom they never saw.

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EPILOGUE.

Between Miss *Grantam* and Old *Wilding*.

(By a man of *Fashion*.)

M. Gr. **H**OLD, Sir.

Our plot concluded, and strict justice done,
Let me be heard as counsel for your son.
Acquit I can't, I mean to mitigate:
Proscribe all lying, what would be the fate
Of this and every other earthly state? }
Consider, Sir, if once you cry it down,
You'll shut up ev'ry coffee-house in town:
The tribe of politicians will want food;
Ev'n now half-famish'd—for the public good.
All Grubstreet murderers of men and sense,
And every office of intelligence,
All would be Bankrupts, the whole lying race,
And no Gazette to publish their disgrace.

O. Wild. Too mild a sentence, must the good and
great
Patriots be wronged, that booksellers may eat?

M. Gr. Your patience, Sir; yet hear another word.
Turn to that hall where justice wields her sword:
Think in what narrow limits you would draw,
By this Proscription, all the sons of law:
For 'tis the fix'd, determin'd rule of courts,
Vyner will tell you, nay, ev'n Coke's Reports,
All pleaders may, when difficulties rise,
To gain one truth, expend a hundred lies.

O. Wild. To curb this practice I am somewhat loath;
A lawyer has no credit but an oath.

M. Gr. Then to the softer sex some favour shew;
Leave no possession of our modest No!

O. Wild

EPILOGUE.

O. Wild. Oh, freely Ma'am we'll that allowance give,
So that two Noes be held affirmative.
Provided ever that your pish and fie,
On all occasions should be deem'd a lye.

M. Gr. Hard terms!

On this rejoinder then I rest my cause;
Should all pay homage to Truth's sacred laws,
Let us examine what would be the case:
Why many a great man would be out of place.

O. Wild. 'T would many a virtuous character restore.

M. Gr. But take a character from many more.

O. Wild. Tho' on the side of bad the ballance fall,
Better to find few good, than fear for all.

M. Gr. Strong are your reasons; yet, ere I submit,
I mean to take the voices of the pit.
Is it your pleasures that we make a rule,
That ev'ry lyar be proclaim'd a fool,
Fit subjects for our author's ridicule?

F I N I S.

14 NO 33

THE
COMMISSARY.

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COMEDY.

VOL. .

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THE
COMMISSARY.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

Mrs. MECHLIN's House.

(*Loud knocking at the Door.*)

Enter JENNY.

RAP, rap, rap, up stairs and down, from morning to night; if this same Commissary stays much longer amongst us, my mistress must e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

(*Simon without.*)

Sim. Is Mrs. Merchlin at home?

Jen. No. (*opens the Door.*) Oh, what is it you, Simon?

Enter Simon.

Sim. At your service, sweet Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Why you knock with authority; and what are your commands, Master Simon?

Sim. I come, Madam, to receive those of your mistress. What, Jenny, has she any great affair on the anvil? Her summons is most exceedingly pressing; and

you need not be told, Child, that a man of my consequence does not trouble himself about trifles.

Jen. Oh, Sir, I know very well you principal actors don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, Ma'am, but notwithstanding your ironical sneer, it is not every man that will do for your mistress; her agents must have genius and parts: I don't suppose, in the whole Bill of Mortality, there is so general and extensive a dealer as my friend Mrs. Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be sure, we have plenty of customers; and for various kinds of commodities it would be pretty difficult I fancy to—

Sim. Commodities! Your humble servant, sweet Mrs. Jane; yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr. Simon, I don't understand you; I suppose it is no secret in what sort of goods our dealing consists.

Sim. No, no, they are pretty well known.

Jen. And to be sure, though now and then, to oblige a customer, my mistress does condescend to smuggle a little—

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs. Jane.

Jen. Yet there are no people in the Liberty of Westminster that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo.

Jen. The very best of quality is not ashamed to visit my mistress.

Sim. They have reason.

Jen. Respected by the neighbours.

Sim. I know it.

Jen. Punctual in her payments.

Sim. To a moment.

Jen. Regular hours.

Sim. Doubtless.

Jen. Never misses the sarvant on Sundays.

Sim. I own it.

Jen. Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unless now and then, when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

Sim. Granted.

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Jen. Not at all given to lying, but like other trades-folks, in the way of business.

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well ! then pray, Sir, what would you insinuate ? Look you, Mt. Simon, don't go to cast reflections upon us ; don't think to blast the reputation of our——

Sim. Harkye, Jenny, are you serious ?

Jen. Serious ! Ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are !

Jen. Upon my word, Mr. Simon, you shou'd not give your tongue such a licence ; let me tell you, these are airs that don't become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day ! why where the deuce have I got, sure I have mistaken the house ; is not this Mrs. Mechlin's ?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs. Mechlin, at the sign of the star, in the parish of St. Paul's ?

Jen. Bravo !

Sim. That commercial caterpillar ?

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures ?

Jen. Doubtless.

Sim. That walking warehouse ?

Jen. Granted.

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter ?

Jen. Very well.

Sim. That engrosser and seducer of virgins ?

Jen. Keep it up, master Simon.

Sim. That foreteller of Bagnios ?

Jen. Incomparable fine.

Sim. That canting, cozening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking—[*Loud knocking.*]

Jen. Mighty well, Sir ; here comes my mistress, she shall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleased to draw.

Sim. Nay, but dear Jenny——

Jen. She shall be told how highly she stands in your favour.

Sim. But my sweet girl—— [*Knock again.*]

Jen. Let me go, Mr. Simon, don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs. Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter Mrs. Mechlin, followed by a hackney coachman, with several bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her cloaths pinned up.

Mrs. Mech. So, hussy, what must I stay all day in the streets? who have we here! the devil's in the wench's, I think—one of your fellows I suppose———Oh, is it you! how fares it, Simon?

Jen. Madam, you should not have waited a minute, but Mr. Simon——

Sim. Hush, hush! you barbarous jade——

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up stairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barr'd up the way.

Sim. Yes, and I am afraid I have put out my ankle. Thanks, Jenny; you shall be no loser, you slut.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon———Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken!——Is the wench petrified; why don't you reach me a chair, don't you see I'm tired to death?

Jen. Indeed, ma'am, you'll kill yourself.

Sim. Upon my word, ma'am Mechlin, you should take a little care of yourself; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing: only victuals and cloaths, more cost than worship.—Why does not the wench take the things from the fellow? Well, what's your fare?

Coachm. Mistress, it's honestly worth half a crown.

Mrs. Mech. Give him a couple of shillings and send him away.

Coachm. I hope you'll tip me the tester to drink?

Mrs. Mech. Them there fellows are never contented; drink!

drink ! stand far off ; why you smell already as strong as a beer-bartel.

Coachm. Mistress, that's because I have already been drinking.

Mrs. Mech. And are not you ashamed, you sot, to be eternally guzzling ? You had better buy you some cloaths.

Coachm. No, mistress, my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs. Mech. Your honour ! and pray how does that hinder you ?

Coachm. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you, cries, Here coachman, here's something to drink——

Mrs. Mech. Well !

Coachm. Wou'd it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing else ? No, mistress, my conscience won't let me, because why, it's the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs. Mech. Did you ever hear of such a blockhead ?

Coachm. No, no, mistress ; tho' I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour ; my cattle, tho' I love 'em, poor beastesses, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mr. Mech. Yes, you and your horses give pretty strong proofs of your love and your honour ; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no flesh. Well, Jenny, give him the six-pence ; there there, lay it out as you will.

Coachm. It will be to your health, mistress ; it shall melt at the Meuse, before I go home ; I shall be careful to clear my conscience.

Mrs. Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coachm. You need not. Mistress, your servant.

[Exit Coachman.]

Mrs. Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny ?

Jen. The gentleman, ma'am, about the Gloucestershire living.

Mrs. Mech. He was, oh oh ! what, I suppose his stomach's come down. Does he like the incumbrance ? will he marry the party ?

Jen. Why that article seems to go a little against him.

Mrs. Mech. Does it so? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will soon give him an appetite. He'll stick to his honour too, till his cassock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, ma'am, it seems pretty rusty already.

Mrs. Mech. Devilish squeamish, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?—

Jen. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Mech. So that the affair will be a secret to all but himself. But he must quickly resolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promised to call about four.

Mrs. Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loss for a husband; there is to my knowledge a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a small place in the custom-house.

Jen. He shall know it.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and tell him, that the party's party has interest enough to obtain it whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchase-money too of that same presentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, ma'am, I should think this would prove the best match for the lady.

Mrs. Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry these things above stairs. Take care of the aigrette, leave the watch upon the table, and be sure you don't mislay the pearl necklace; the lady goes to Mrs. Cornelly's to night; and if she has any luck, she will be sure to redeem it to-morrow.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs. Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, master Simon.—But I have a great affair in hand—Such an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all!

Sim. If I, ma'am, can be of the least use—

Mrs. Mech.

Mrs. Mech. Of the highest! there is no doing without you.——You know the great——

Enter Jenny.

Jen. I have put the things where you order'd, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit Jenny.* I say, you know the great Commissary, that is come to lodge in my house. Now they say this Mr. Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor; heaven knows how he came by it: but that you know is no business of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant, abroad. [*Loud knocking.*] Who the deuce can that be? But let it be who it will, you must not go till I speak to you.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. The widow Loveit, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. What the old liquorish dowager from Devonshire Square? shew her in. [*Exit Jenny.*] You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon, I shall soon dispatch her affair. [*Exit Simon.*]

Enter Mrs. Loveit.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, good morning to you, good Mrs. Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs. Mech. You had better sit here, madam.

Mrs. Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—Ugh, ugh, ugh—[*coughs.*] Consider I have no time to loose, and you are always so full of employment.

Mrs. Mech. Forgot you! you shall judge, Mrs. Loveit. I have, ma'am, provided a whole cargo of husbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and sizes: so you see you have nothing to do but choose.

Mrs. Lov. To choose! Mrs. Mechlin; Lord help me what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and

and a great one it was My poor dear man that's gone, I shall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs. Mech. Pshaw, madam, don't let us trouble our heads about him, it's high time that he was forgot.

Mrs. Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick.

Mrs. Mech. Nor a jot; the greatest compliment you cou'd pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reason to be fond of the state. But what do you mean by quick! Why he has been bury'd these three weeks—

Mrs. Lov. And three days, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed! quite an age!

Mrs. Lov. Yes; but I shall never forget him; sleeping, or waking, he's always before me. His dear swell'd belly, and his poor shrunk legs, Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

Mrs. Lov. No!

Mrs. Mech. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a purple nose, and his little weezen face as sharp as a razor—don't mention it, I can never forget him. [*Cries.*]

Mrs. Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance, indeed. But, ma'am, if you continue to be so fond of your last husband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs. Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? a poor lone widow woman as I am; there's no body minds me; my tenants behind hand, my servants all careless, my children undutiful—Ugh, ugh, ugh—
[*coughs.*]

Mrs. Mech. You have a villainous cough, Mrs. Lovett; shall I send for some lozenges?

Mrs. Lov. No, I thank you, it's nothing at all; mere habit, just a little trick I've got.

Mrs. Mech. But I wonder you shou'd have all these vexations to plague you, madam, you, who are so rich, and so—

Mrs. Lov. Forty thousand in the Four per Cents every morning I rise, Mrs. Mechlin, besides two houses at Hackney; but then my affairs are so weighty and intricate; there is such tricking in lawyers, and such torments in children, that I can't do by myself; I must have a helpmate; quite necessity, no matter of choice.

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Mrs. Mech. Oh, I understand you, you marry merely for convenience; just only to get an assistant, a kind of a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs. Low. Nothing else.

Mrs. Mech. I thought so; quite prudential; so that age is none of your object; you don't want a scampering, giddy, sprightly, young—

Mrs. Low. Young! Heaven forbid. What, do you think, like some ladies I know, that I want to have my husband taken for one of my grand-children; No, no; thank Heaven, such vain thoughts never enter'd my head.

Mrs. Mech. But yet, as your matters stand, he ought not to be so very old neither; for instance now, of what use to you wou'd be a husband of sixty?

Mrs. Low. Sixty! are you mad, Mrs. Mechlin, what do you think I want to turn nurse?

Mrs. Mech. Or fifty five?

Mrs. Low. Ugh, ugh, ugh—

Mrs. Mech. Of fifty?

Mrs. Low. Oh! that's too cunning an age; men, now-adays, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs. Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or—

Mrs. Low. Shall I, Mrs. Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs. Mech. I believe, ma'am, that will be your best way.

Mrs. Low. Why then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to secure and preserve their obedience, will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. Why I thought you declar'd against youth?

Mrs. Low. So I do, so I do; but then, six or seven and twenty is not so very young, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age; for at that time of life, men can bustle and stir, they are not easily check'd, and whatever they take in hand they go through with.

Mrs. Low. True, true.

Mrs. Mech.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be said to be useful; it is the only tear and wear season.

Mrs. Lov. Right, right.

Mrs. Mech. Well, ma'am, I see what you want, and to-morrow about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call——

Mrs. Lov. I shan't fail.

Mrs. Mech. I think I can suit you.

Mrs. Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs. Mech. You may depend upon't, I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs. Lov. But, Mrs. Mechlin, be sure don't let him be older than that, not above seven or eight and twenty at most; and let it be as soon as you conveniently can.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, ma'am.

Mrs. Lov. Because you know, the more children I have by the second venter, the greater plague I shall prove to those I had by the first.

Mrs. Mech. True, ma'am. You had better lean on me to the door; but, indeed, Mrs. Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs. Lov. Ah, they deserve it; you can't think what sad whelps they turn out; no punishment can be too much; if their poor father cou'd but have foreseen they wou'd have——why did I mention the dear man? it melts me too much. Well, peace be with him.——To-morrow about this time, Mrs. Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs. Mech. I can't say.

Mrs. Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Here, John, take care of your mistress.

[Exit Mrs. Loveit.]

A good morning to you, ma'am.——Jenny, bid Simon come up——A husband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clause to the act to prevent the old from marrying clandestinely as well as the young. I am sure there are as many unsuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

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Enter Simon.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr. Fungus's servants below?

Sim. Three or four strange faces.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, some of that troop, I suppose; come, Simon, be seated.—Well, Simon, as I was telling you; this Mr. Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart load of money, and who, (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts——

Sim. I formerly knew him, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs. Mech. I am glad of that—this spark, I say, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determin'd to rival them too in every other accomplishment.

Sim. Will that be so easy? why he must be upwards of—

Mrs. Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to set up for a gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. But since talents you know, and a strong inclination——

Sim. That, indeed——

Mrs. Mech. Then I promise you he spares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent?

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always at it, Learning something or other from morning to night: my house is a perfect academy, such a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, musicians—but, however, to sweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs. Mech. But one of his studies is really diverting, I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs. Mech. Oratory—You must know his first ambition is to have a seat in a certain assembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr. What d'ye Call'em, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture on speaking, and there is such haranguing and bellowing,

bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll see enough on't yourself; for you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, madam!

Mrs. Mech. Ay, his privy counsellor, has confidant, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that answer?

Mrs. Mech. There I am coming—You are to know, that our Squire Wou'd-be, is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing forsooth will go down but a person of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs. Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter contempt, a grand alliance is all that he wants; so that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two pence how low and empty her purse is.

Sim. But, ma'am, won't it be difficult to meet with a suitable subject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that—

Mrs. Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed!

Mrs. Mech. You know my niece Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs. Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of miss Dolly, for what?

Mrs. Mech. For what? you are plagiarily dull; why, a woman of fashion, you dunce.

Sim. To be sure miss Dolly is very deserving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bless me, madam, here people of rank are so generally known, that the slightest enquiry wou'd poison your project.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fears from that quarter; there I think, I am pretty secure.

Sim. If that, indeed be the case—

Mrs. Mech. In the first place, Mr. Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's something.

Mrs. Mech. Then to baffle any idle curiosity, we are

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not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upstart nobility to your Harry's and Edward's. No, no, we are scions from an older stock ; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal descendant from Hercules Alexander, earl of Glendowery, prime minister to king Malcolm the First.

Sim. Odso ! a qualification for a canon of Strasbourg. So then it seems you are transplanted from the banks of the Tweed ; Cry you mercy ! But how will Miss Dolly be able to manage the accent !

Mrs. Mech. Very well ; she was two years an actress in Edinborough.

Sim. That's true ; is the overture made, has there been any interview ?

Mrs. Mech. Several ; we have no dislike to his person ; can't but own he is rather agreeable ; and as to his proposals, they are greater than we cou'd desire ; but we are prudent and careful, say nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be easily had.

Mrs. Mech. Not so easily ; and now comes your part : but first, how goes the world with you, Simon ?

Sim. Never worse ! The ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, them peering rascals took from me in Sussex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs. Mech. Poor Simon ! why then I am afraid there's an end of your traffic.

Sim. Totally : for now those fellows have got the Isle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Then you are intirely at leisure ?

Sim. As a Bath turnspit in the month of July.

Mrs. Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family servant in waiting here on the lady ; but dispatch'd to the North with a view to negotiate the treaty, you are just returned with the noble Peer's resolution. Prepare you a suitable equipage, I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady——

Sim.

Sim. The contents.—

Mrs. Mech. Oh, you may read them within: now with regard to any questions, I will furnish you with suitable answers; but you have a bungler to deal with, so your cards will be easily play'd.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Miss Dolly, ma'am, in a hackney coach at the corner; may she come in?

Mrs. Mech. Are the servants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, she is so muffled up and disguised, that she'll run no danger from them.

Mrs. Mech. Be sure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, ma'am. *[Exit Jenny.]*

Mrs. Mech. Simon, take those two letters that are under the farthestmost cushion in the window, run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at farthest.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs. Mech. Time enough. I shall be in the way; for it is me that must introduce you above. *[Exit Simon.]* So, things seem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me easy for life. To say truth, I begin to be tir'd of my trade. To be sure the profits are great; but then, so are the risks that I run: besides, my private practice begins to be smok'd. Ladies are suppos'd to come here with different designs than merely to look at my goods: some of my best customers too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Those asylums, they gave a dreadful blow to my business. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could supply him with choice in an hour; but the market is spoiled, and a body might as soon produce a hare or a partridge as a pretty——— *[Enter Dolly.]*
———So niece, are all things prepar'd; have you got the papers from Harpy?

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Dolly. Here they are, ma'am.

Mrs. Mech. Let me see—Oh the marriage articles for Fungus to sign. Have you got the contract about you?

Dolly. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs. Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I—Here it is; this, Dolly, you must sign and seal before witness.

Dolly. To what end, aunt?

Mrs. Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your husband, that he may reimburse your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dolly. I hope my aunt does not suspect that I can ever be wanting—

Mrs. Mech. No, my dear, not in the least: but it is best, Dolly, in order to prevent all retrospection, that we settle accounts before you change your condition.

Dolly. But, ma'am, may not I see the contents?

Mrs. Mech. The contents, love, of what use will that be to you? Sign and seal, that's enough.

Dolly. But, aunt, I choose to see what I sign.

Mrs. Mech. To see, what then you suspect me?

Dolly. No, ma'am; but a little caution—

Mrs. Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! how dare you dispute my commands; have not I made you, raised you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dolly. Madam, I—

Mrs. Mech. Answer me, huffy, was not you a beggar's brat at my door; did not I, out of compassion, take you into my house, call you my niece, and give you suitable breeding?

Dolly. True, madam.

Mrs. Mech. And what return did you make me? You was scarce got into your teens, you forward slut, but you brought me a child almost as big as yourself; and a delightful father you chose for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre musician; that sick monkey-face maker of crotchets; that eternal trotter after all the little drabble

draggle-tail'd girls of the town. Oh, you low slut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vex'd me; but a fidler!

Dolly. For heaven's sake.—

Mrs. Mech. After that you elop'd, commenc'd stroler, and in a couple of years, return'd to town in your original trim, with scarce a rag to your back.

Dolly. Pray, ma'am—

Mrs. Mech. Did not I, notwithstanding, receive you again? have not I tortur'd my brains for your good? found you a husband as rich as a jew, just brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuse to sign a paltry paper?

Dolly. Pray, madam, give it me, I will sign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs. Mech. You will; yes, so you had best. And what's become of the child, have you done as I order'd?

Dolly. The doctor was not at home; but the nurse left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs. Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dolly. Not a word.

Mrs. Mech. Then he is meditating some mischief, I warrant. However, let our good stars secure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky tho', that Mr. Fungus has chosen the doctor for his master of music; but as yet he has not been here, and, if possible, we must prevent him.

Enter Jenny, hastily.

Jen. Mr. Fungus, the tallow-chandler, ma'am, is crossing the way, shall I say you are at home?

Mrs. Mech. His brother has servants enough, let some of them answer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exit Dolly and Jenny*]
 —[*One knock at the door*] Ay, that's the true tap of the trader; this old brother of ours tho' is squaky and shrewd, and tho' an odd a sensible fellow; we must guard against him; if he gets but an inkling, but the slightest suspicion, our project is marr'd.—[*A noise without.*] What the deuce is the matter! As I live, a squabble

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squabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hir'd this morning. This may make mirth, I'll listen a little. [Retires.

Enter Mr. Isaac Fungus, driving in La Fleur.

I. Fung. What, is there no body in the house that can give me an answer ; where's my brother, you rascal ?

La Fleur. Je n'entend pas.

I. Fung. Pas, what the devil is that ; answer yes or no, is my brother at home ? don't shrug up your shoulders at me, you——Oh, here comes a rational being

Enter Mrs. Mechlin.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it ? this here lanthorn-jaw'd rascal won't give me an answer, and indeed wou'd scarce let me into the house.

La Fleur. C'est gros Bourgeois a fait une tapage de diable.

Mrs. Mech. Fy donc c'est le frere de monsieur.

La Fleur. Le frere ! Mon Dieu !

I. Fung. What is all this ? what the devil lingo is the fellow a-talking ?

Mrs. Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fung. From France ! and is that the best of his breeding ? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and insult us at home. People make such a rout about smuggling their frenchified goods, their men do us more mischief. If we could but hinder the importing of them——

Mrs. Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton, I see that, Mr. Isaac.

I. Fung. I warrant me : is brother Zachary at home ?

Mrs. Mech. Above stairs, Sir.

I. Fung. Any company with him ?

Mrs. Mech. Not any to hinder your visit. La Fleur, ouvrez la porte.

I. Fung. Get along you——Mrs. Mechlin, your servant

vant.——I can't think what the devil makes your quality so fond of the monfieurs; for my part I don't see——
—March and be hang'd to you—you looty-fac'd——

[*Exeunt* L. Fungus, and La Fleur.

Mrs. Mech. Come Dolly, you now may appear.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Mr. Paduasoy, ma'am, the Spital-fields weaver; he has been waiting this hour, and says he has some people at home——

Mrs. Mech. Let him enter; in a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly. [*Exit* Jenny.

Enter Paduasoy.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduasoy you may load yourself home with those silks, they won't do for my market.

Mr. Pad. Why, what's the matter, Madam?

Mrs. Mech. Matter! you are a pretty fellow indeed; you a tradesman! but it's lucky I know you, things might have been worse; let us settle accounts, Mr. Paduasoy; you'll see no more of my money.

Mr. Pad. I shall be sorry for that, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Sorry! answer me one question; am not I the best customer that ever you had?

Pad. I confess it.

Mrs. Mech. Have not I mortgaged my precious soul, by swearing to my quality-customers that the stuff from your looms was the produce of Lyons?

Pad. Granted.

Mrs. Mech. And unless that had been believ'd, could you have sold them a yard, nay a nail?

Pad. I believe not.

Mrs. Mech. Very well. Did not, Sir, I procure you more money for your curs'd goods, when sold as the manufacture of France, than as mere English they could have ever produced you?

Pad. I never deny'd it.

Mrs. Mech. Then are not you a pretty fellow, to blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

Pad.

Pad. Me, madam!

Mrs. Mech. Yes you.

Pad. As how?

Mrs. Mech. Did not you tell me these pieces of silk were entire, and the only ones you had made of that pattern?

Pad. I did.

Mrs. Mech. Now mind. Last monday I left them as just landed, upon a pretence to secure them from seizure, at the old countess of Furbelow's, by whose means, I was sure, at my own price, to get rid of them both; and who should come in last night at the ball at the Mansion-house, where my lady unluckily happen'd to be, with a full suit of the blue pattern upon her back, but Mrs. Deputy Dowlass, dizen'd out like a dutchess.

Pad. Mrs. Deputy Dowlass! Is it possible?

Mrs. Mech. There is no denying the fact: but that was not all; if indeed, Mrs. Deputy had behaved like a gentlewoman, and swore they had been sent her from Paris, why there the thing would have died: but see what it is to have to do with mechanicks, the fool owned she had them from you. I should be glad to see any of my customers at a loss for a lye. But those trunpery traders, Mr. Paduasoy, you'll never gain any credit by them.

Pad. This must be a trick of my wife's; I know the women are intimate, but this piece of intelligence will make a hot house. None of my fault, indeed, Mrs. Mechlin; I hope, ma'am, this won't make any difference?

Mrs. Mech. Difference! I don't believe I shall be able to smuggle a gown for you these six months. What is in that bundle?

Pad. Some India handkerchiefs, that you promis'd to procure of a supercargo at Woolwich, for Sir Thomas Callico's lady.

Mrs. Mech. Are you pretty forward with the light sprigg'd waistcoats from Italy?

Pad. They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs. Mech. You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of the autumn; but you may make
me

me immediately a fresh assortment of foreign ribbons for summer.

Pad. Any other commands, Mrs. Mechlin?

Mrs. Mech. Not at present, I think.

Pad. I wish you, madam, a very good morning.

Mrs. Mech. Mr. Paduasoy, Lord! I had lik'd to have forgot. You must write an anonymous letter to the Custom-house, and send me some old silks to be seized; I must treat the town with a bonfire! it will make a fine paragraph for the papers; and at the same time advertise the public where such things may be had.

Pad. I shan't fail, madam. [Exit Paduasoy.

Mrs. Mech. Who says now that I am not a friend to my country! I think the Society for the Encouragement of arts, should vote me a premium. I am sure I am one of the greatest encouragers of our own manufactures.

[Exit Mrs. Mechlin.

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SCENE First Continues.

Enter Commissary Fungus, Isaac Fungus, and Mrs. Mechlin.

Zac. Fungus.

BROTHER Isaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But first answer me this ; can knowledge do a man any harm ?

I. Fun. No, sartin' ; what is besitting a man for to learn.

Z. Fun. To learn ! and how should you know what is besitting a gentleman to learn ! Stick to your trade, master tallow-chandler.

I. Fun. Now, brother Zachary, can you say in your conscience, as how, it is descent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almost lost the use of your legs ?

Z. Fun. Lost the use of my legs ! to see but the malice of men ! Do but ax Mrs. Mechlin ; now, ma'am, does not Mrs. Dukes say, that, considering my time, I have made a wonderful progress ?

I. Fun. Your time, brother Zac !

Z. Fun. Ay, my time, brother Isaac. Why, I ha'nt been at it passing a couple of months, and we have at our school two aldermen and a serjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs. Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fun. There now, Mrs. Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, ma'am, does not master allow, that of my age, I am the most hopeful scholar he has ?

Mrs. Mech. I can't but say, Mr. Isaac, that the 'squire has made a most prodigious improvement.

Z. Fun. Do you hear that ? I wish we had but a kit, I would show you what I could do : one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha. There are risings and sinkings.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

VOL. II.

K

Z. Fun]

Z. Fun. A'n't it ! Why, before next winter is over, he says, he'll fit me for dancing in public ; and who knows but in Lent, you may see me amble at a Ridotto with an opera singer.

Mrs. Mech. And I warrant he acquits himself as well as the best.

I. Fun. Mercy on me ; and pray brother, that thing like a sword in your hand, what may the use of that implement be ?

Z. Fun. This ! oh, this is a foil.

I. Fun. A foil.

Z. Fun. Ay, a little instrument, by which, we who are gentlemen, are instructed to kill one another.

I. Fun. To kill ! Marry, heaven forbid ; I hope you have no such bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac, you was used to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fun. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic and afraid of the law, but now I am another guess person ; I have been in camps, cantons, and intrenchments : have marched over bridges and breaches ; I have seen the Ezel and Wezell ; I'm got as rich as a Jew, and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fun. Rich as a Jew ! Ah, Zac ! Zac ! but if you had not had another guess trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether so rich ; but now you have got all this wealth, why not sit down and enjoy it in quiet ?

Z. Fun. Hark ye, Isaac, do you purtend to know life are you acquainted with the Beaux d'Esprits of the age ?

I. Fun. I don't understand you.

Z. Fun. No. I believe not ; then how should you know what belongs to gentility ?

I. Fun. And why not as well as you, brother Zac, hope I am every whit as well born ?

Z. Fun. Ay, Isaac, but the breeding is all ; consider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think should know a little what belongs to the business ; hey, Mrs. Mechlin ?

Mrs. Mech. Very true, Sir.

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Z. Fun. And as to this foil, do you know, Isaac, in what the art of fencing consists ?

I. Fun. How shou'd I ?

Z. Fun. Why it is short; there are but two rules; the first is, to give your antagonist as many thrusts as you can; the second, to be careful and receive none yourself.

I. Fun. But how this is to be done ?

Z. Fun. Oh, easy enough: for do you see, if you can but divert your adversary's point from the line of your body, it is impossible he ever should hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wrist, either this way, or that way. But I'll show you: John, bring me a foil. *Mrs. Mechlin*, it will be worth your observing. Here, brother Isaac.—[*Offers him a foil.*]

I. Fun. Not I.

Z. Fun. These bourgeois are so frightful. *Mrs. Mechlin*, will you, ma'am, do me the favour to push at me a little? Mind, brother, when she thrusts at me in carte, I do so; and when she pushes in tierce, I do so; and by this means a man is sure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiss, brother Isaac, to give you the progress of a regular quarrel; and then you will see what sort of a thing a gentleman is. Now I have been told, do see, brother Isaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you please, has in public company call'd me a cuckold——

I. Fun. A cuckold? But how can that be? because why, brother Zac. you be'nt married.

Z. Fun. But as I am just going to be marry'd, that may very well happen you know.

Mrs. Mech. True.

Z. Fun. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has said, I am a cuckold. Upon which, the first time I set eyes on captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall, or at Ranelagh, I accost him, in a courteous, genteel-like manner.

I. Fun. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fun. Your patience, dear Isaac——in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; captain Hopkins, your servant.

I. Fun. Why, you call'd him but now Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fun. P'shaw! You blockhead, I tell you the name does not signify nothing—Your servant; shall I crave your ear for a moment? The captain politely replies, Your commands, good Mr. Fungus? then we walk side by side—Come here, Mrs. Mechlin—[*They walk up and down*] for some time as civil as can be. Mind brother Isaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fun. Hey!—no, t'other side, Mrs. Mechlin.—that's right—I hear captain Wilkins—

I. Fun. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fun. Zounds! Isaac, be quiet—Wilkins, that you have taken some liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't understand—

I. Fun. Don't swear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fun. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow?

I. Fun. But you are grown such a reprobate since you went to the wars—

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, stop the tongue of that blockhead; why, dunce, I am speaking by rule, and Mrs. Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, always.

Z. Fun. Which, damme, I don't understand. Liberties with you, cries the captain, where, when, and in what manner? Last Friday night, in company at the St. Alban's, you call'd me a buck, and moreover said, that my horns were exalted. Now, Sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand satisfaction. That, Sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr. Fungus, I can't consent to give you that rank. How, sir, do you deny my gentility! Oh, that affront must be answered this instant—Draw, Sir. Now push, Mrs. Mechlin. [*They fence.*] There I parry tierce, there I parry carte, there I parry—Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs. Mechlin.

I. Fun. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well push'd, Mrs. Mechlin.

Z. Fun.

Z. Fun. Ay, but instead of pushing in tierce, she pushed me in carte, and came so thick with her thrusts, that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fun. Well, well, I am fully convinc'd of your skill; but I think, brother Zac. you hinted an intention of marrying, is that your design?

Z. Fun. Undoubtedly.

I. Fun. And when?

Z. Fun. Why this evening.

I. Fun. So sudden! and pray is it a secret to whom?

Z. Fun. A secret, no, I am proud of the match; she brings me all that I want, her veins full of good blood; such a family! such an alliance! zooks, she has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Isaac, with large trees on each side, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fun. But has the lady no name?

Z. Fun. Name! ay, such a name, lord, we have nothing like it in London: none of your stunted little dwarfish words of one syllable; your Watts, or your Potts, and your Trots; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs. Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs. Mech. Lady Sacharissa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fun. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of syllables for you. Lineally descended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, Earl of Glendower, prime minister to king Malcolm the First.

I. Fun. And are all the parties agreed?

Z. Fun. I can't say quite all; for the right honourable peer that is to be my papa, (who by the bye) is as proud as the devil, has flatly renounc'd the alliance, calls me here in his letter Plebeian, and says if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pye balls.

I. Fun. And what does the gentlewoman say?

Z. Fun. The gentlewoman! Oh, the gentlewoman, who (between ourselves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my person has prov'd too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fun. It is resolv'd?

Z. Fun. Fix'd.

I. Fun. I am sorry for it.

Z. Fun. Why so ? come, come, brother Isaac, don't be uneasy, I have a shrewd guess at your grievance ; but though you may not be suffer'd to see lady Scracariffa at first, yet who knows before long I may have interest enough with her to bring it about ; and in the mean time you may dine when you will with the steward.

I. Fun. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fun. Mrs. Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainsay it.

Mrs. Mech. By no means ; it is wonderful, considering her rank, how mild and condescending she is : why, but yesterday, says her ladyship to me, though Mrs. Mechlin, it can't be suppos'd that I shou'd admit any of the Fungus family into my presence——

Z. Fun. No, no, to be sure ; not at first, as I said.

Mrs. Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the servants every day.

Z. Fun. Do you hear, Isaac, there's your true, inherent nobility, so humble and affable ; but people of real rank never have any pride ; that is only for upstarts.

I. Fun. Wonderfully gracious ; but here, brother Zac. you mistake me ; it is not for myself I am sorry.

Z. Fun. Whom then ?

I. Fun. For you. Don't you think that your wife will despise you. ?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you suppose that you will live together a month ?

Z. Fun. Yes.

I. Fun. Why, can you bear to walk about your own house like a paltry dependant ?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To have yourself and your orders contemn'd by your servants ?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. To see your property devour'd by your lady's beggarly cousins, who, notwithstanding, won't vouchsafe you a nod ?——

Z. Fun.

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her sending, come at her calling, dine by yourself when she has bettermost company, and sleep six nights a week in the garret?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Why, will you dare to d'fobey, have the impudence to dispute the sovereign will and pleasure of a lady like her?

Z. Fun. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fun. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fun. No.

I. Fun. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fun. Look you, brother, I know what you wou'd be at; you don't mean I shou'd marry at all.

I. Fun. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I shou'd with pleasure see you equally match'd, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fun. You wou'd? I don't doubt it, but that is a pleasure you will never have. Look you, Isaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have; and if you say any more, I'll not be contented with that, for dammee, I'll marry a duchess.

Enter La Fleur.

La Fleur. Le Maître pour donner d'Eloquence.

Z. Fun. What does the puppy say, Mrs. Mechlin, for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs. Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a speaker.

Z. Fun. Odzooks! a special fine fellow, let's have him.

Mrs. Mech. Faites le entrer.

[Exit La Fleur.]

I. Fun. Brother, as you are busy, I will take another—

Z. Fun. No, no, this is the finest fellow of all, it is he that is to make me a man; and hark ye, brother, if

I should chance to rise in the state, no more words, your business is done.

I. Fun. What, I reckon some member of parliament.

Z. Fun. A member; Lord help you, brother Isaac, this man is a whole senate himself. Why it is the famous orationer that has publish'd the book.

I. Fun. What, Mr. Gruel.

Z. Fun. The same.

I. Fun. Yes, I have seen his name in the news.

Z. Fun. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me such secrets: Why do you know, Isaac, by what means 'tis we speak?

I. Fun. Speak! why we speak with our mouths.

Z. Fun. No, we don't.

I. Fun. No!

Z. Fun. No. He says we speak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and without them we should only bellow.

I. Fun. But surely the mouth—

Z. Fun. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing, only just a cavity for the air to pass through.

I. Fun. Indeed!

Z. Fun. That's all; and when the cavity's small, little sounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed; observe now in whistling and bawling.—
[whistles and bawls.]—Do you see. Oh, he is a miraculous man.

I. Fun. But of what use is all this?

Z. Fun. But it's knowledge, an't it; and of what signification is that, you fool! and then as to use, why he can make me speak in any manner he pleases; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the subject requires.—But here he is.

Enter Mr. Gruel.

Mr. Gruel, your servant; I have been holding forth in your praise.

Gruel I make no doubt, Mr. Fungus, but to your declamation, or recitation, (as Quintillian more properly terms it) I shall be indebted for much future praise,
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in as much as the reputation of the scholar does (as I may say) confer, or rather as it were reflect, a marvellous kind of lustre on the fame of the master himself.

Z. Fun. There, Isaac ! didst ever hear the like ? he talks just as if it were all out of a book ; what wou'd you give to be able to utter such words ?

I. Fun. And what shou'd I do with them ? them holiday terms wou'd not pass in my shop ; there's no buying and selling with them.

Gruel. Your observation is pithy and pertinent ; different stations different idioms demand, polished periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics ; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baser kind of coin, for the ease and convenience of inferior traffic, so it is indulg'd with a vernacular or vicious vulgar phraseology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce ; but I doubt, Sir, I soar above the region of your comprehension ?

I. Fun. Why if wou'd come down a step or two, I can't say but I shou'd understand you the better.

Z. Fun. And I too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall : if the gentleman has any ambition to shine at a vestry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can supply him with ample materials.

I. Fun. No, I have no such desire.

Gruel. Not to lose time ; your brother here, (for such I find the gentleman is) in other respects a common man, like yourself——

Z. Fun. No better.

Gruel. Observe how alter'd by means of my art : are you prepar'd in the speech on the great importance of trade ?

Z. Fun. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel. Let your gesticulations be chaste, and your muscular movements consistent.

Z. Fun. Never fear——[*Enter Jenny, and whispers Mrs. Mechlin.*]

Mrs Mechlin, you'll stay ?

Mrs. Mech. A little business, I'll return in an instant.

[*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you please, Sir, there you will only catch his profile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face ; one, two, three ; now off you go.

Z. Fun. When I consider the vast importance of this day's debate ; when I revolve the various vicissitudes that this soil has sustain'd ; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were ; and what we, their civilized successors, are ; when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and chesnuts——

Gruel. Pignuts, good Sir, if you please.

Z. Fun. You are right ; crab-apples and pignuts ; and that we feast on green-peas, and on custards : when I trace in the recording historical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now know we have fish by land carriage, I am lost in amazement at the prodigious power of commerce. Hail commerce ! daughter of industry, consort to credit, parent of opulence, full sister to liberty, and great grandmother to the art of navigation——

I. Fun. Why this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fun. Prithee Isaac be quiet—art of navigation—a—a—'vigation.——Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not ; this day's performance has largely fulfill'd your yesterday's promise.

Z. Fun. But I han't half done, the best is to come ; let me just give him that part about turnpegs—for the sloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impassible bogs, that the languid, but generous, steed travelled through ; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole legion of turnpegs.

Enter Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Your riding-master is below.

Z. Fun. Gadso ! then here we must end. You'll pardon me, good Mr. Gruel ; for as I want to be a finished gentleman as soon as I can, it is impossible for me to stick long to any one thing.

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Gruel. Sir, Though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the multiplicity of your avocations do, (as I may say) in some measure, cicatrize the otherwise mortal wound on this occasion sustained by decorum.

Z. Fun. Cicatrize! I could hear him all day. He is a wonderful man. Well, Mr. Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your slightest volition.

Z. Fun. I wish, brother Isaac, I could have staid, you should have heard me oration way like a lawyer, about pleadings and presidents, but all in good time.—

[Exit Fungus.]

Mrs. Mech. This gentleman, Sir, will gain you vast credit.

Gruel. Yes, ma'am, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confess, are enormous; and as to you I am indebted for this promising pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an instantaneous and gratis lecture on that species of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, Sir, I have no sort of occasion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man, (for such I define him to be) a male or a masculine manner belongs—

Mrs. Mech. Any other time, good Mr. Gruel.

Gruel. So to that biped, woman, she participating of his general nature, the word *homo*, in Latin, being promiscuously used as woman or man—

Mrs. Mech. For heaven's sake—

Gruel. But being cast in a more tender and delicate mold—

Mrs. Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The soft, supple, insinuating graces—

Mrs. Mech. I must insist—

Gruel. Do appertain, (as I may say) in a more peculiar, or particular, manner;—

Mrs. Mech. Nay, then—

Gruel. Her rank, in the order of entities.—

Mrs. Mech. I must thrust you out of my house.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

Mrs. Mech. Was there ever such a—[pushing him out.]

Re-enter

Re-enter Gruel.

Gruel. To those eminent, hazardous, and, (as I may say) perilous conflicts, which so often:—

Mrs. Mech. Get down stairs, and be hang'd to you. [*Pushes him out.*] There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom; I hope, I han't done him mischief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr. Gruel?—No, all's safe; I hear him going on with his speech; an impertinent puppy!

I. Fun. Impertinent, indeed, I wonder all those people don't turn your head, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, I am pretty well us'd to 'em. But who comes here! Mr. Isaac, if you will step into the next room, I have something to communicate that well deserves your attention. [*Exit Isaac Fungus.*]

Enter Simon.

Sim. Doctor Catgut at the foot of the stairs.

Mrs. Mech. The devil he is! What can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilst he is here. [*Exit Simon.*] I hope he has not heard of the pretty present we sent him to day.

Enter Dr. Catgut.

Dr. Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, ma'am, received a couple of compliments from your mansion this morning; one I find from a lodger of your's, the other I presume from your niece; but for the last, I rather suppose I am indebted to you.

Mrs. Mech. Me! indeed, Doctor, you are widely mistaken; I assure you, Sir, since your business broke out, I have never set eyes of her once.

Dr. Cat. Then I am falsely informed.

Mrs. Mech. But after all you must own it is but what you deserve; I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off these tricks.

Dr. Cat. Why what can I do, Mrs. Mechlin? my constitution requires it.

Mrs.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed, I should not have thought it.

Dr. Cat. Then the dear little devils are so desperately fond.

Mrs. Mech. Without doubt.

Dr. Cat. And for frolick, flirtation, diligence, dress and address——

Mrs. Mech. To be sure.

Dr. Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myself, will be found that can match me.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr. Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin; let me perish, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs. Mech. Indeed!

Dr. Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I should positively be tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs. Mech. Ay, but Doctor, consider I am not of a trifling age, it would be only losing your time.

Dr. Cat. Ha, so coy! But a propos, Molly, this lodger of your's; who is he, and what does he want?

Mrs. Mech. You have heard of the great Mr. Fungus?

Dr. Cat. Well!

Mrs. Mech. Being informed of your skill and abilities, he has sent for you to teach him to sing.

Dr. Cat. Me teach him to sing! What does the scoundrel mean to affront me?

Mrs. Mech. Affront you!

Dr. Cat. Why don't you know, Child, that I quitted that paltry profession?

Mrs. Mech. Not I.

Dr. Cat. Oh, intirely renounc'd it.

Mrs. Mech. Then what may you follow at present?

Dr. Cat. Me!—nothing. I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs. Mech. A poet!

Dr. Cat. A poet. The Muses; you know I was always fond of the ladies! I suppose you have heard of Shakespeare, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton, and Hudibras?

Mrs. Mech. I have.

Dr. Cat.

Dr. Cat. I shall blast all their laurels, by gad ; I have just given the public a taste, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, you surprise me ; but pray, is poetry a trade to be learn'd ?

Dr. Cat. Doubtless. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs. Mech. And cou'd you communicate your art to another ?

Dr. Cat. To be sure. Why I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhymes, from Z quite to great A. Let us see, A. ay, here it begins, A, afs, pafs, grafs, mafs, lasfs, and so quite thro' the alphabet down to Z. zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs. Mech. And what do you do with those rhymes ?

Dr. Cat. Oh, we supply them.

Mrs. Mech. Supply them ?

Dr. Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will shew you. Last week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made these rhymes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the stocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that sort of writing.

First she.—*There to see the sluggish afs,
I through the meadows as we pass.
Eating up the farmer's grafs,
Blyth and merry be the mafs,
As a lively country lasfs.*

Mrs. Mech. Very pretty.

Dr. Cat. A'n't it. Then he replies,

*Hear the farmer cry out, zounds !
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beast has broke my mounds ;
If the parish has no pounds,
Kill and give him to the bounds.*

Then Da Capo, both in repeating the last stanza ;
and

and this tack'd to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You observe ?

Mrs. Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is desirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr. Cat. In that case, he may command me, my dear ; and I promise you, in a couple of months, he shall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs. Mech. At present he is a little engaged, but as soon as the honey-moon is over——

Dr. Cat. Honey-moon ! Why is he going to be marry'd ?

Mrs. Mech. This Evening, I fancy.

Dr. Cat. The finest opportunity for an introduction in nature ; I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin. of my own composition, such an epithalamium.

Mrs. Mech. Thalmium, what's that ?

Dr. Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compose at the solemnization of weddings.

Mrs. Mech. Oh, ho !

Dr. Cat. It is set to musick already, for I still compose for myself.

Mrs. Mech. You do ?

Dr. Cat. Yes. What think you now of providing a band, and serenading the 'Squire to night ? It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs. Mech. The prettiest thought in the world. But I hear Mr. Fungus's bell. You'll excuse me, dear Doctor, you may suppose we are busy.

Dr. Cat. No apology then, I'll about it this instant.

Mrs. Mech. As soon as you please ; any thing to get you out of the way. [*Aside and exit.*]

Dr. Cat. Your obsequious, good madam Mechlin. But notwithstanding all your fine speeches, I shrewdly suspect my blessed bargain at home was a present from you ; and what shall I do with it ?——These little embarrasses we men of intrigue are eternally subject to. There will be no sending it back. She will never let it enter the house.—Hey ! gad, a lucky thought is come into my head——this serenade is finely contrived.——Madam Mechlin shall have her cousin again,
for

for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double base-viot; so the Bawd shall have a concert as well as the 'Squire.——

[Exit Dr. Catgut.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III

SCENE CONTINUES.

Enter Harpy, Young Loveit, and Jenny.

Harpy.

TELL your mistress my name is Harpy; she knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr. Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?

[Exit Jenny.

Har. The same. Ay, ay, young gentleman, this is your woman; I warrant your business is done. You knew Kitty Williams, that marry'd Mr. Abednigo Potiphar, the Jew broker?

Y. Lov. I did.

Har. And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champansy, from the isle of St. Kitt's?

Y. Lov. I have seen him.

Har. All owing to her. Her success in that branch of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

Y. Lov. Indeed! She must be very adroit.

Har. Adroit! You shall judge. I will tell you a case: you know the large brick house at Peckham, with a turret at top?

Y. Lov. Well.

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Har. There liv'd Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite the cheesemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turn'd of fourteen, and under the wing of an old maiden aunt as watchful as a dragon—but hush—I hear Mrs. Mechlin, I'll take another session to finish my tale.

Y. Lov. But, Mr. Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to gossiping, I wou'd rather my real name was a secret till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossiping! She, lord help you, she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

Y. Lov. That may be, but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well, as you please.

Enter Mrs. Mechlin.

Your very humble servant, good madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs. Mech. Any friend of yours, Mr. Harpy; won't you be seated, Sir.

Y. Lov. Ma'am.

[*They sit down.*]

Mrs. Mech. And pray, Sir, how can I serve you?

Har. Why, ma'am, the gentleman's situation is—but, Sir, you had better state your case to Mrs. Mechlin yourself.

Y. Lov. Why, you are to know, ma'am, that I am just escap'd from the University, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly esteem'd.

Mrs. Mech. Very obliging. I must own, Sir, I have had a very great respect for that learned body, ever since they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of music.

Y. Lov. Yes, ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs. Mech. Do you know him, Sir? I expect him every minute to instruct a lodger of mine.

Y. Lov. Not intimately. Just arriv'd, but last night; upon my coming to town I found my father deceas'd, and all his fortune devis'd to his relict, my mother.

Mrs. Mech. What, the whole!

Y. Lov.

Y. Lov. Every shilling. That is, for her life.

Mrs. Mech. And to what sum may it amount ?

Y. Lov. Why, my mother is eternally telling me, that after her, I shall inherit fifty or sixty thousand at least.

Mrs. Mech. Upon my word, a capital sum.

Y. Lov. But of what use, my dear Mrs. Mechlin, since she refuses to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it, and while the grass grows—You know the proverb. —

Mrs. Mech. What, I suppose you want something for present subsistence.

Y. Lov. Just my situation.

Mrs. Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourself ?

Y. Lov. I am resolv'd to be guided by you.

Mrs. Mech. What do you think of a wife ?

Y. Lov. A wife !

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, don't despise my advice ; when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better resource than a usurer ; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleasure in repairing the injuries done by fortune to handsome young fellows.

Har. Mrs. Mechlin has reason.

Y. Lov. But, dear ma'am, what can I do with a wife ?

Mrs. Mech. Do ! Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little stricken in years ; make her your banker and steward. If you say but the word, before night I'll give you a widow with two thousand a year in her pocket.

Y. Lov. Two thousand a year ! a pretty employment, if the residence cou'd be dispens'd with.

Mrs. Mech. What do you mean by residence ? —

Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful treader, is to be eternally tack'd to his wife's petticoat : when she is in town, be you in the country ; as she shifts do you shift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year ; and let me tell you, you won't find a more easy condition ; twelve months subsistence for one month's labour !

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Y. Lov. Two thousand a year, you are sure?

Mrs. Mech. The least penny.

Y. Lov. Well, madam, you shall dispose of me just as you please.

Mrs. Mech. Very well, if you will call in half an hour at farthest, I believe we shall finish the business.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

Mrs. Mech. Precisely. Oh, dispatch is the very life and soul of my trade. Mr. Harpy will tell you my terms, you will find them reasonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am sure we shall have no dispute about those.

Y. Lov. No, no.—[*Going.*]

Mrs. Mech. Oh, but Mr. Harpy, it may be proper to mention that the gentlewoman, the party, is upwards of sixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart; it is the purse, not the person I want! Sixty? she is quite a girl; I wish with all my soul she was ninety.

Mrs. Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I see that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, sweet Mrs. Mechlin, adieu. [*Exeunt Young Loveit and Harpy.*]

Mrs. Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonshire-square, and now to cater for my commissary. Here he comes.

Enter Fungus and Bridoun.

Fun. So, in six weeks—Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs. Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conscious that in this step, she descends from her dignity; but being desirous to screen you from the fury of her noble relations, she is determined to let them see that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fun. Very kind, very obliging indeed. But, Mrs. Mechlin, as the family is so furious, I reckon we shall never be reconcil'd.

Mrs. Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought commissions for her three younger brothers, discharged the mortgage on the paternal estate, and portioned

oned off eight or nine of her sisters, it is not impossible
cut my lord may be prevailed on to suffer your name—

Fun. Do you think so?

Mrs. Mech. But then a work of time, Mr. Fungus.

Fun. Ay, ay, I know very well things of that kind are
not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs. Mech. But I must prepare matters for the lady's
reception.

Fun. By all means. The jewels are sent to her lady-
ship?

Mrs. Mech. To be sure,

Fun. And the ring for her ladyship, and her lady-
ship's licence?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyship's parson too;
all are prepar'd.

Fun. Parson! why won't her ladyship please to be
marry'd at Powl's?

Mrs. Mech. Lord, Mr. Fungus, do you think a lady
of her rank and condition would bear to be seen in pub-
lic at once with a person like you?

Fun. That's true, I——

Mrs. Mech. No, no; I have sent to Dr. Tickletext,
and the business will be done in the parlour below.

Fun. As you and her ladyship pleases, good Mrs.
Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. You will get dress'd as soon as you can.

Fun. I shall only take a short lesson from Mr. Bri-
doun, and then wait her ladyship's pleasure. Mrs.
Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being so is kept a
secret from her.

Fun. Never fear.———[*Exit. Mrs. Mechlin.*] Well,
Mr. Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little.——

Bri. A great deal.

Fun. And that in a month or six weeks I may be able
to prance upon a long-tail'd horse in Hyde-park, with-
out any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fun. It will be vast pleasant, in the heat of the day,
to canter along the King's-road, side by side, with the
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Fun.

ladies, in the thick of the dust; but that I must not hope for this summer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it close.

Fun. Never fear, I shan't be sparing of—But come, come, let us get to our business——John, have the carpenters brought home my new horse?

Enter John.

John. It is here, Sir, upon the top of the stairs.

Fun. Then fetch it in, in an instant.—[*Exit John.*]
What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr. Bridoun, to the making a gentleman. And do your gentlemen born now (for I reckon you have had of all sorts) take as much pains as we do?

Brid. To be sure; but they begin at an earlier age.

Fun. There is something in that; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuterer now in catching their larning.

Brid. Dispositions do certainly differ.

Fun. Ay, ay, something in nater, I warrant, as they say the children of blackamoors will swim as soon as they come into the world.

[*Enter Servants with a wooden horse.*]

Oh, here he is, ods me! it is a stately fine beast.

Brid. Here my lads, place it here——very well, where's your switch, Mr. Fungus?

Fun. I have it.

Brid. Now let me see you vault nimbly into your seat. Zounds! you are got on the wrong side, Mr. Fungus?

Fun. I am so, indeed, but we'll soon rectify that.—Now we are right: may I have leave to lay hold of the mane?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fun. I will try; but this steed is so devilish tall—Mr. Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me?

Brid. Never fear.

Fun. Well, if he shou'd, he can't kick, that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now mind your position.

Fun. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fun. There.

Brid. And your shoulders fall easily back.

Fun. Ho——there.

Brid. Your switch perpendicular in your right hand
——Your right——that is it, your left to the bridle.

Fun. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fun. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fun. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fun. Don't let him gallop at first.

Brid. Very well : preserve your position.

Fun. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you easy?

Fun. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr. Bridoun,
I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fun. Ay, ay, I can't think but this here horse stands
still very near as fast as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fun. Ho, Stop the horse, Zounds ! I'm out of the
stirrups, I can't sit him no longer ; there I go.——
[Falls off.]

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fun. My left hip has a little confusion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident ; it might happen to
the very best rider in England.

Fun. Indeed !

Brid. We have such things happen every day at the
manege ; but you are vastly improv'd.

Fun. Why, I am grown bolder a little ; and, Mr.
Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live
horse?

Brid. The very instant you are able to keep your seat
on a dead one.——

Enter Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Bless me, Mr. Fungus, how you are
trifling

trifling your time ! I expect lady Sacharissa every moment, and see what a trim you are in.

Fun. I beg pardon, good madam Mechlin. I'll be equipp'd in a couple of minutes ; where will her ladyship please to receive ?

Mrs. Mech. In this room, to be sure ; come, stir, stir.

Fun. I have had a little fall from my horse.—I'll go as fast as I—Mr. Bridoun, will you lend me a lift ?

[*Exeunt Fungus and Bridoun.*]

Mrs. Mech. There — Jenny, show Mrs. Loveit in here—Who's there—

Enter Servants.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haste. Madam, if you'll step in here for a moment.

Enter Mrs. Loveit.

Mrs. Lov. So, so, Mrs. Mechlin ; well, you see I am true to my time, and how have you throve, my good woman ?

Mrs. Mech. Beyond expectations.

Mrs. Lov. Indeed ! And have you provided a party ?

Mrs. Mech. Ay, and such a party, you might search the town round before you cou'd meet with his fellow : he'll suit you in every respect.

Mrs. Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman ?

Mrs. Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding, none of your little whipper snapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a presence as portly ; he has one fault indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs. Lov. What is it ?

Mrs. Mech. His age.

Mrs. Lov. Age ! how, how ?

Mrs. Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid ; not above twenty at most.

Mrs. Lov. Well, well, so he answers in every thing else, we must overlook that ; for, Mrs. Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs. Mech. True, ma'am.

Mrs. Lov.

Mrs. Lov. And where is he ?

Mrs. Mech. I look for him every minute ; if you will but step into the drawing-room, I have given him such a picture, that I am sure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs. Lov. My dear woman, you are so kind and obliging : but, Mrs. Mechlin, how do I look ? don't flatter me, do you think my figure will strike him ?

Mrs. Mech. Or he must be blind.

Mrs. Lov. You may just hint, black don't become me, that I am a little paler of late ; the loss of a husband and one loves will cause an alteration, you know.

Mrs. Mech. True ; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs. Lov. But things will come round in a trice

[Exit Mrs Loveit.

Enter Simon.

Sim. Madam, miss Dolly is dizen'd out, and every thing ready.

Mrs. Mech. Let her wait for the Commissary here, I will introduce him the instant he is dress'd.

[Exit Mrs. Mechlin.

Sim. Miss Dolly, you may come in, your aunt will be here in an instant.

Enter Dolly and Jenny.

Dolly. Hush, Simon, hush, to your post.

Sim. I am gone——— [Exit Simon.

Dolly. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality air ?

Jen. As perfectly, ma'am, as if you had been bred to the business ; and for figure, I defy the first of them all. For my part, I think Mr. Fungus very well off : when the secret comes out I don't see what right he has to be angry.

Dolly. Oh, when once he is noos'd, let him struggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we must trust to your management. I hope, miss, I shall have the honour to follow your fortunes ; there will be no bearing this house, when once you have left it.

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Dolly. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of so useful a second ; besides, for mistress and maid, we rather know one another a little too well.

Jen. Indeed ! but here comes Mr. Fungus ; remember distance and dignity.

Dolly. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I see what I have to hope. Our young filly seems to be secure of her match ; but I may jostle her the wrong side of the post : we will have a trial, however, but I must see and find out the brother.

Enter Z. Fungus, and Mrs. Mechlin.

Fun. Yes. Scarlet is vastly becoming, and takes very much with the ladies ; quite proper too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs. Mech. Stay where you are till you are announc'd to the lady. Mr. Fungus begs leave to throw himself at your ladyship's feet.

Dolly. The mon may dra nigh.

Mrs. Mech. Approach.

Fun. One, two, three, ha ! Will that do ?

Mrs. Mech. Pretty well.

Fun. May I begin to make love ?

Mrs. Mech. When you will.

Fun. Now stand my friend, Mr. Gruel. But she has such a deal of dignity that she dashes me quite.

Mrs. Mech. Courage.

Fun. Here, hold the paper to prompt me in case I shou'd stumble—Madam, or, may it please your ladyship, When I preponderate the grandeur of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanness of my dingy descent ; when I consider that your ancestors, like Admiral Anson, sail'd all round the world in the ark ; and that it is a matter of doubt, whether I ever had any forefathers or no ; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition—Ah—a, is not Phaeton next ?——

Mrs. Mech. Hey !——[*Looking at the paper.*] No, Luna.

Fun. Right ;—ambition—dignity how debas'd, distance

ance how great: it is as if the link shou'd demand an alliance with Luna; or the bushy-bramble court the boughs of the stately Scotch fir; it is as if—What's next?

Mrs. Mech. Next—hey!——I have lost the place I am afraid—Come, come, enough has been said; you have shew'd the sense you entertain of the honour. Upon these occasions, a third person is fittest to cut matters short. Your ladyship hears that——

Dolly. Yes, yes, I keen weel enough what the mon wou'd be at. *Mrs. Mechlin* has spear'd sike things in your great commendations, *Mr. Fungus*, that I cannot but say I clik'd a fancy to you from the beginning.

Fun. Much oblig'd to *Mrs. Mechlin*, indeed, please your la'ship.——

Dolly. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North Briton can boast.

Fun. I know it full well, please your la'ship.

Dolly. And that I shall get the ill-will of a' my kin by this match.

Fun. I am sorry for that, please your la'ship.

Dolly. But after the ceremony it will be proper to withdraw from town for a short space o'time.

Fun. Please your la'ship, what your la'ship pleases.

Dolly. In order to gi that gossip, Scandal, just time to tire her tongue.

Fun. True, your la'ship.

Dolly. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in choosin' sike a consort as you.

Fun. And with me too, please your la'ship.

Dolly. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs. Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dolly. Donna you think the honor will 'dra' mickle envy upon you.

Fun. Oh, to be sure, please your la'ship. I did not mean that.

Dolly. Weel, I say we'll gang into the country.

Fun. As soon as your la'ship pleases; I have a sweet house hard by Reading.

Dolly. You ha'; that's right.

Fun. One of the most pleasantest places that can be gain.

Dolly.

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Dolly. Ha' you a good prospect?

Fun. Twenty stage-coaches drive every day by the door, besides carts and gentlemen's carriages.

Dolly. Ah, that will——

Mrs. Mech. Oh, your ladyship will find all things prepar'd: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fun. The honour of your la'ship's hand——

Dolly. Maister Fungus, you're a little too hasty.

[*Exit Dolly.*]

Mrs. Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you must not expect to be too familiar at first.

Fun. Pray, when do you think we shall bring the bedding about?

Mrs. Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter sets in.

Fun. Not before!

Enter Young Loveit, hastily.

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr. Harpy wou'd call.

Mrs. Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr. Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the same hands after you.

Fun. He's heartily welcome: What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs. Mech. No, no, a cit; but monstrously rich; but your lady will wonder——

Fun. Ay, ay, but you'll follow; for I shan't know what to say to her when we are alone.—

[*Exit Fungus.*]

Mrs. Mech. I will send you, Sir, your spouse in an instant: the gentlewoman is a widow, so you may throw what raptures you please.

Y. Lov. Never fear. [*Exit Mrs. Mechlin.*]——And let this scene be so new, how to acquit myself—let me recollect—some piece of a play now.—“Vouchsafe divine perfection”—No, that won't do for a dowager; it's too humble and whining. But see, the door opens, I have no time for rehearsal—I have it—“Clasp'd

"in the folds of love I'll meet my doom, and aft
my"——

Enter Mrs. Loveit.

Mrs. Lov. Hah !

Y. Lov. By all that's monstrous, my mother !

Mrs. Lov. That rebel my son, as I live !

Y. Lov. The quotation was quite a-propos : had it
been a little darker, I might have reviv'd the story of
Oedipus.

Mrs. Lov. So, Sirrah, what makes you from your
studies ?

Y. Lov. A small hint I receiv'd of your inclinations
brought me here, ma'am, in order to prevent, if possi-
ble, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs. Lov. Your father ! how dare you disturb his
dear ashes ; you know well enough how his dear me-
mory melts me ; and that at his very name my heart is
ready to break.

Y. Lov. Well said, my old matron of Ephesus.

Mrs. Lov. That is what you want, you disobedient
unnatural monster ; but compleat, accomplish your cru-
elty : send me the same road your villanies forc'd your
father to take.

Enter Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Hey-day ! What the deuce have we here ;
our old lady in tears !

Mrs. Lov. Disappointed a little ; that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Pray, ma'am, what can occasion——

Mrs. Lov. Lord bless me, Mrs. Mechlin, what a
blunder you have made.

Mrs. Mech. A blunder ! as how ?

Mrs. Lov. Do you know what you have brought
me ?

Mrs. Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs. Lov. My own son ! that's all.

Mrs. Mech. Your son !

Mrs. Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural——

Mrs. Mech. Blunder indeed ! But who cou'd have
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thought it; why, by your account, ma'am, I imagin'd your son was a child scarce out of his frocks.

Mrs. Lov. Here's company coming, so my reputation will be blasted for ever.

Mrs. Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter Fungus and Dolly.

Fun. What is the matter; you make such a noise, there is no such thing as minding the writings.

Mrs. Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having set eyes on her son since the death of his father; and being apprised by me, that here she might meet with him, came with a true maternal affection to give him a little wholesome advice.

Mrs. Lov. Well said, Mrs. Mechlin.

Mrs. Mech. Which the young man returned in a way so brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—be comforted, ma'am; you had better repose on my bed.

Mrs. Lov. Any where to get out of his sight.

Mrs. Mech. Here, Jenny.

Mrs. Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party.

Mrs. Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs. Lov. Ugh, ugh— [Exit coughing.

Mrs. Mech. Bear up a little, ma'am.

Fun. Fye upon you, you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the stericks.

F. Lov. Sir!

Fun. You a man, you are a scandal, a shame to your sect.

Enter Dr. Catgut.

Dr. Cat. Come, come, Mrs. Mechlin, are the couple prepar'd; the fiddles are tun'd, the bows ready rozin'd, and the whole band—Oh, you, Sir, are one party I reckon, but where is the—Ah, Dolly, what are you here, my dear?

Dolly. Seh!

Fun. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

L 3

Dr. Cat.

Dr. Cat. As nice and as spruce too, the bridemaid I warrant: Why you look as blooming, you slut.

Fun. What can this be? hark ye, Sir!

Dr. Cat. Well, Sir.

Fun. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr. Cat. Rank and condition: what, Dolly?

Fun. What a plague possesses the man; this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr. Cat. No!

Fun. No, this is lady Scracariffa Mackirkincroft.

Dr. Cat. Who?

Fun. Descended from the old, old, old earl of Glendowery.

Dr. Cat. What she, Dolly Mechlin?

Fun. Dolly Devil, the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter Mrs. Mechlin.

Oh, Mrs. Mechlin, will you set this matter to rights?

Mrs. Mech. How, Dr. Catgut!

Fun. The strangest fellow here has danc'd up-stairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady; who the plague can he be?

Dr. Cat. Oh, a-propos, Molly Mechlin, what is this the man that is to be married? the marriage will never hold good; why he is more frantic and madder—

Fun. Mad! John fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you scoundrel.

Enter Isaac Fungus and Jenny.

I. Fun. Where's brother, it a'n't over; you be'n't marry'd, I hope.

Z. Fun. No, I believe not; why, what is the—

I. Fun. Pretty hands you are got into! Your servant, good madam; what this is the person, I warrant; ay, how pretty the puppet is painted; do you know who she is?

Z. Fun. Who she is? without doubt.

I. Fun.

I. Fun. No, you don't, brother Zac, only the spawn of that devil incarnate, drefs'd out as—

Z. Fun. But hark ye, Isaac, are—don't be in a hurry—are you sure—

I. Fun. Sure—the girl of the house, abhorring their scandalous project, has freely confessed the whole scheme. Jenny, stand forth, and answer boldly to what I shall ask, Is not this wench the woman's niece of the house?

Jen. I fancy she will hardly deny it.

I. Fun. And is not this mistress of yours a most profligate—

Mrs. Mech. Come, come, Master Isaac, I will save you the trouble, and cut this matter short in an instant:—well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fun. And ar'n't you asham'd?

Y. Lov. She asham'd! I wou'd have told you, but I cou'd not get you to listen; why she brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fun. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monster! to draw a young man to be guilty of incense. But hark ye, brother Isaac, [*they retire*]—

Dr. Cat. Gads my life, what a sweet project I have help'd to destroy; but come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again; thou hast a good pretty voice, I'll teach thee a thrill and a shake, perch thee amongst the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a mistress, which, as the world goes, is a much better station than that of a wife, not the proudest of them all—

Mrs. Mech. Mistress! No, no, we have not manag'd our matters so badly. Hark ye, Mr. Commissary.

Z. Fun. Well, what do you want?

Mrs. Mech. Do you propose to consummate your nuptials?

Z. Fun. That's a pretty question, indeed.

Mrs. Mech. You have no objection then to paying the penalty, the contract here that Mr. Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fun. The contract, hey, brother Isaac.

I. Fun. Let me see it.

Mrs. Mech. Soft you there, my maker of candles, it

is as well where it is ; but you need not doubt of its goodness : I promise you the best advice has been taken.

Z. Fun. What a damn'd fiend, what a harpy !

Mrs. Mecb. And why so, my good master Fungus ; is it because I have practis'd that trade by retail which you have carried on in the gross ? What injury do I do the world ? I feed on their follies, 'tis true ; and the game, the plunder, is fair ; but the fangs of you and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel :
To their candour and justice I make my appeal ;
Tho' a poor humble scourge in a national cause,
As I trust I deserve, I demand your applause.

14 NO63

THE
COZENERS.

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COMEDY.



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PROLOGUE.

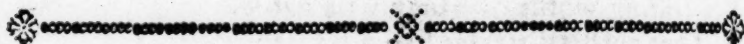
IN trifling works of fancy wits agree,
That nothing tickles like a simile :
And so, by way of tuning you to laughter,
With which, I hope, you'll tickle us hereafter ;
From our poetic storehouse, we produce
A couple, spick and span for present use.
Dramatic writers were, like watchmen, meant
To knock down vice—few answer the intent ;
Both should be quick to see and seize their game ;
But both are sometimes blind, and sometimes lame ;
Can those cry stand, while they themselves are reeling ?
Can these catch thieves, while they themselves are steal-
ing ?

When wanted most, the watch a nap will take—
Are all our comic authors quite awake ?
Or, what is worse, by which they still come near 'em,
Are not you more than half asleep who hear 'em.
I, your old watchman, here have fix'd my stand,
On many a vice and folly laid my hand. }
'Twas you cry'd watch, I limp'd at your command. }
Let me, like other watchmen, blest the times,
And take the privilege to nod betimes ;
Nor let your frowns now force me on a fright
To cry,—“ Past seven o'clock, and a cloudy night.”
But with your patience not to be too free,
We'll change the subject and the simile.
To chase a smuggling crew, who law deride,
We launch a cutter of three guns this tide :
With your assistance, we will make the foe
Sink, or submit to—Captain Timbertoe.
Ye pirate critics, fall not foul on me,
If once I sink, I founder in the sea—
In this condition, can I swim to shore ?
I'm cork'd, 'is true, but then I want an oar.

Besides.

PROLOGUE.

Besides 'tis dangerous, I find, to sleep
One's self and ship in brine twelve fathom deep—
My head I'd rather above water keep—
Yoo oft have sav'd my little bark from sinking,
I am no fish, save me from water drinking.



Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Mr. AIRCASTLE.
Mr. O'FLANNAGAN,
Colonel GORGET,
FLAW,
TOM,
MOSES MANASSES,
TOBY,
ROGER,

Mr. Foote,
Mr. Palmer.
Mr. Moody.
Mr. Aickin.
Mr. Davis.
Mr. Baddelley.
Mr. Weston.
Mr. Burton.

W O M E N.

Mrs. FLEECE'M
Mrs. AIRCASTLE,
Mrs. SIMONY,
BETSY BLOSSOM,
MARIAMNE.

Mrs. Gardner.
Mrs. Williams.
Miss Platt.
Mrs. Jewell.
Mrs. Weston.

14 N 063

THE

THE
COZENERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'm and Flaw.

Mrs. Fleece'm.

NOT a word more ; you put me out of all patience.
Flaw. Well, but Madam Fleece'm, listen I beg to a little reason.

Mrs. Flee. Reason ! had you the least atom about you, you would rest contented with our present agreement.

Flaw. But surely, Madam, a change of circumstances—

Mrs. Flee. Change ! And pray, Mr. Flaw, how are mine chang'd for the better ? Answer me a few short questions, and deny what I say if you can.—When I was compell'd by the cruel laws of this country to go into exile, for taking, by mistake, a small parcel of lace out of a shop in the Strand, did I not choose Boston for my place of retirement ?

Flaw. Granted.

Mrs. Flee. Did not I pass there, by means of letters from Mynheer Van Smuggle of Rotterdam, for a person most honorably and nobly allied ?

Flaw. For ought I know.

Mrs. Flee. Did not I receive a handsome present from that merchant for promoting the running Dutch teas, and rejecting those imported from England ?

Flaw. Like enough.

Mrs. Flee.

Mrs. Flee. Did not my burning the first pound of Souchong, and my speeches at Faneuil-hall, and the Liberty-Tree, against the colonies contributing to discharge a debt to which they owe their existence, procure me the love and esteem of the people.

Flaw. May be so.

Mrs. Flee. And what but your letters could induce me to return to a country where I had been treated so ill? But sure you must have forgot your proposals—here they are, and sign'd by yourself—Let me see—Articles of agreement between Philip Flaw, of Thavies-Inn, in the City of London, on one part, and Felicia Fleece'm, late of Boston, but now of Pall-Mall—

Flaw. But what occasion—

Mrs. Flee. Imprimis, That the said Felicia do take a handsome house at the west end of the town, with suitable servants; for the furnishing of which, the said Flaw engages to procure her credit—

Flaw. And have not I?

Mrs. Flee. Secondly, That the said Flaw shall circulate privately and publicly in Taverns, Coffee-houses, Journals, Chronicles, Morning and Evening Posts, and Courants, that the said Felicia is a person of great address and abilities, and that by means of many powerful connections she is able to procure posts, places, preferments, of all conditions and sizes; to raise cash for the indigent, and procure good securities for such as are wealthy; suitable matches for people who want husbands and wives; and divorces for those who wish to get rid of them.

Flaw. And have not I performed every tittle? have not my expences in attending plays, operas, masquerades, and pantheons, not to mention subscription-money to most of the clubs and coteries, amounted to a most enormous—

Mrs. Flee. I am near at an end—That the said Flaw, shall at all times advise the said Felicia, how far she may go without incurring the law; for all which he is to receive out of the neat profits 30 per cent. You see, Sir.—

Flaw. I do.

Mrs. Flee. And don't you think that a very ample provision?
Flaw.

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Flaw. But consider, Madam, I have sacrific'd my whole time to your business, and I don't believe the law has procur'd me——

Mrs. Flee. The law ! What, a little private agency at the Old Baily ; a wonderful sacrifice ! Fie, fie, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. You are the last person, Mrs. Fleece'm, that should cast such a reflection as that——unless I mistake, my attendance there was pretty useful to you.

Mrs. Flee. To me !

Flaw. Without my skill and address, your last voyage to America would have been chang'd to a much shorter trip.

Mrs. Flee. Sir !

Flaw. A tour to Tyburn in a tim whisky and two, would have concluded your travels.

Mrs. Flee. Why, you impertinent, infamous, petty-fogging puppy ; it was through your ignorance that I was obliged to travel at all.

Flaw. Mine !

Mrs. Flee. Did not Alick Alibi, before your face, at Blackwall, in the transport, declare that he never saw such a bungling business, and that if he had been employ'd——

Flaw. Alibi !

Mrs. Flee. You know him, I fancy.

Flaw. Perfectly. As, Madam, you think him so wonderfully clever, you had better employ him ; I am ready to resign in his favour.

Mrs. Flee. That is ungenerous in you, Mr. Flaw, to insult a gentleman under misfortunes. You know the clipping and filing affair compels him to keep a little private at present.

Flaw. Oh ! then that is the reason I am consulted. Sweet Madam, your servant.—But, Madam, I must desire you to find out some other agent ; I declare off ;—you shall not make a stop-gap of me.

Mrs. Flee. Sir !

Flaw. Our accounts are easily settled——Let me see ; nine pounds seven shillings from the brewer's clerk, who is gone with your recommendatory letters to India.

Mrs. Flee.

Mrs. Flee. Seven pounds, if you please.

Flaw. The rest paid out of my pocket to Kitt Copywell, for manufacturing the letters from the Directors.

Mrs. Flee. Very well; have you got the fellow aboard?

Flee. Sailed the latter end of the week.

Mrs. Flee. Then there is the crimps money for procuring the Company an able recruit.

Flaw. Already deducted for promising to get Bob Blue-skin a reprieve at the——

Mrs. Flee. These, Mr. Flaw, are but trifling affairs, they may be settled at some other time.

Flaw. I am ready, when ever you please; and so, Madam Fleece'em, I am your most humble and very——Oh! I had like to have forgot; if any thing should happen, that I may not be blam'd *in futuro*, I would advise you to take care of yourself; I've heard Luke Lockup, the turnkey, say, as you pass'd by in a coach, that he had some notion of having seen you before, and wanted much to know where you lodg'd.

Mrs. Flee. Luke Lockup! Why how is it possible he could——

Flaw. I know nothing of that; foreseeing, indeed, that such a thing might possibly happen, I had provided a couple of people to prove that you were shipwrecked on the Western Coast; so that tho' you were return'd before your time from your travels, it was none of your fault; but that is all over now. Mr. Alibi will, no doubt, take proper care.

Mrs. Flee. Nay, as to that, Mr. Flaw, there is no man living to whose care I would sooner trust myself that to your own; but sure, in this affair, we have been both of us rather too quick. Let us coolly consider——I am sure I am the farthest in the world from——But come, let us know what are your farther demands.

Flaw. I scorn, Madam, to take any advantage: as our risks and labours are equal, an equal partition, that is all.

Mrs. Flee. I consent to the agreement.

Flaw. Very well, I will prepare a draft to lay before Council; which, when approved, you will sign.

Mrs. Flee. Without scruple; that being settled, let us

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Flaw.
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us come a little to business. What new game have you sprung?

Flaw. Plenty, plenty. The family I expected out of the country is come.

Mrs. Flee. Father, mother, and the son. Have you seen them?

Flaw. I receiv'd their note but this instant; they have made a little mistake, I believe, as to their lodgings.

Mrs. Flee. How so?

Flaw. I advis'd them at their coming to town, to stay at one of the hotels for a week or ten days; instead of that, they are got to a bagnio!

Mrs. Flee. A bagnio!

Flaw. At the sign of the Lamb in Long-Acre.

Mrs. Flee. Nay, for aught I know, that place will best answer our purpose.

Flaw. I must step directly to the Salopian Coffee-house, Ensign Gaters is to send you a hundred, for obtaining him a step in his corps—Here, I have brought you the complimentary cards to put over the chimney.

Mrs. Flee. That's right—Let me see, the Duke of ———, Earl of ———, Viscount——, Ah, ha; very well. Have you prevail'd on the coachman you mention'd?

Flaw. He has promis'd to parade before your house, for an hour after his master is set down at the Cockpit; a couple of servants to wait at the door, as if the great man was above, will be right.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. A note, Sir, from a person below.

Flaw. Let us see it—"Mr. O'Flannagan's compliments, to Mr. Flaw, and as he perhaps may not choose to be at home to him, being at another body's house, begs to know where he may see him this evening."—A bagatelle, some trifling affair.

Mrs. Flee. You had therefore better dispatch him at once. Show him up.

Flaw. He brought me a recommendatory letter this morning, but I was in a hurry, and desired him to meet me here, about this time. Here he is.

Enter

Enter O'Flannagan.

O'Flan. Mr Flaw, I am your most humble servant,
—Madam, I am yours; tho' unknown.

Flaw. Well, Mr. O'Flannagan, what are your commands with me?

O'Flan. Oh! Mr. Flaw, we will postpone that if you please: I hope I am a little better bred than to mention any thing of my private affairs before ladies: their little ears sweet creatures, should be tickled with nothing but love.

Flaw. True, true; but here you may suspend your politeness a little; for unless I am mistaken it is to this lady's good offices you must be oblig'd in your present pursuit.

O'Flan. O! that indeed alters the case: why then, Madam, this is my business at once; you must understand I came over lately from Limerick; and tho' upon my soul, all the world are gone mad about running beyond sea, in search after, I think it is, emigrations they call them.

Mrs. Flee. I have heard, indeed, that there has been a prodigious desertion.

O'Flan. Prodigious, upon my soul, Madam; in a hundred miles riding, I did not meet with a human creature, except sheep and oxen, to tell me the road; and I should have lost myself again and again, but for the mile stones that are so kind to answer your questions, without giving you the trouble to ask them; and so being desirous to follow my neighbours' example, I have, Madam, made bold to come over before them.

Flaw. Right. One would not like to be lost in the chace.

O'Flan. True. Now, Madam, as some emigrations must be better than other some, I shou'd be glad to be recommended to one of the best.

Flaw. Why, that will be no very difficult matter. Let me see,—is the collector of the window-lights in Falklands islands disposed of?

Mrs. Flee. I have not heard that it hath been given away:

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way ; but however, if it should, the surveyorship of the woods there is vacant, I am sure.

Flaw. Indeed !

O'Flan. And, pray Madam, is that a lucrative place, as to the profit ?

Mrs. Flee. Besides the salary, for perquisites, you are to have all the loppings and toppings.

Flaw. Ay ! upon my word, if that can be got, you will be a happy man, Mr. O'Flannagan.

O'Flan. Without doubt, I shall be in very good luck. But pray, Madam, what was the name of the Falklands ?

Mrs. Flee. Falkland's Island.

O'Flan. Island ; true, true. But Mr. Flaw, is it a place one can go to by land ; because why, I am not over fond of the sea, coming over t'other day from Donoghadee it humbled, and jumbled, and rumbled me to such a degree.

Mrs. Flee. Mr. Flaw—

Flaw. I am afraid it will be difficult.

O'Flan. Why then, if it is equally the same, I should be glad to have an emigration in some other parts.

Mrs. Flee. There was a thing that I got yesterday for a relation of mine, that would have suited this gentleman.

O'Flan. Pray what might that be ?

Mrs. Flee. A tide-waiter's place in the inland part of America.

O'Flan. Inland ; that would just do to a T.

Flaw. Why you may easily provide in some other was for you cousin.

Mrs. Flee. That is true ; but then, you know, he has put himself to some expence in fitting himself out for the——

Flaw. O, I dare say Mr. O'Flannagan will be glad to reimburse him.

O'Flan. That I will, and give him a spill for his resignation into the bargain.

Mrs. Flee. Well, Sir, if you will call here to-morrow, we will try to bring matters to bear——and——

[*O'Flannagan going.*]

Flaw. Harkée, a word in your ear ; this will be a damn'd

damn'd fine thing if you can get it ; if you discharge well your duty, you will be found in tar and feathers for nothing.

O'Flan. Tar and feathers ! and what the devil will I do with them, my dear ?

Flaw. When properly mix'd, they make a genteel kind of a dress, which is sometimes wore in that climate.

O'Flan. Oh ! What I suppose a kind of linen, like that at Belfast, that the natives manufacture themselves.

Flaw. True. And they will shew you the best manner to wear it ; it is very light, keeps out the rain, and sticks extremely close to the skin.

O'Flan. Indeed ! That is very convenient ; why as this place seems to suit me so well, before I get the nomination, by way of binding the bargain, had not I better give some earnest before hand ?

Flaw. That will be making things sure.

O'Flan. Here is a fifty pound note of Latouche's, payable at sight in a fortnight.

Mrs. Flee. Vastly well, I shall take proper care on't.

O'Flan. I don't doubt it at all. Feathers that keep out the rain, they must be ducks to be sure, because they are us'd to the water.

Flaw. It will become you, I am sure.

O'Flan. I can't help thinking, Mr. Flaw, when I have got on the dress, how like a goose I shall look.

[Exit.

Flaw. Here, here is the note.

Mrs. Flee. This was lucky beyond expectation ; if this goes on, in a little time we shall grow as rich as a keeper of one of the capital clubs. [A rap at the door.]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A gentleman below wishes to see Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. What sort of a person ?

Serv. Vast finely dress'd, please your——

Flaw. Oh ! I know ; shew him up. The Israelite I was telling you of.

Mrs. Flee. What, Mr. Moses Manasses ?

Flaw. The same.

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Enter Moses Manasses.

Walk in, Mr. Manasses. This, Sir, is the lady.

Moses. I vas never see a more finer womans, since I vas born. Madam, I vas take the liberty to beg a your protection upon a littel affairs.

Mrs. Flee. Sir, any friend of Mr. Flaw's—

Moses. I vas live in de City, but I have great ambition to reside at de Court end of de town.

Mrs. Flee. City! I could not have conceived that a gentleman of your drefs and address, would submit to live in the City.

Moses. Madam, you vas exceeding polite, indeed. I always finds de ladies very partial to me, I vas have de honour to be chosen last veek maister of de ceremony to de Mile-End assembly, and Mrs. Alderman Inkle herself make always choice of me for de cotillions.

Mrs. Flee. I make not the least doubt of your great success with the ladies.

Moses. Oh! Madam!

Flaw. Mr. Manasses, madam, is modest. The City! his success has not been confin'd to the City; many a heart-ach has he given to men of consequence too, let me tell you, on this side the Bar.

Moses. Oh! fie, fie, Master Flaw.

Flaw. What, don't I know; did not you occasion the separation between Mrs. Modish of Marybone and her husband?

Moses. Oh fie; a flim, indeed, Master Flaw.

Flaw. Pooh! Besides, was not you seen during all the last summer, lounging on horseback, thro' all the lone lanes about Chelsea and Fulham, with young lady Harrowheart?

Moses. All scandal, upon my honour.

Flaw. Zounds! Why have not I heard the young fellows at Betty's, when you have been passing by with Lady Kitty Carmine, in her new vis-a-vis, exclaim, Look, look, there is Moses again; damn me, I can't conceive what the ladies can see in that pencil-selling mungrel Manasses; 'gad I fancy he catches women as people do quails, with his pipe.

Moses.

Moses. Dat is all spite, all malice, on honour.

Mrs. Flee. Pipe! what does he sing?

Flaw. He! The voice of Squallache, with the taste and manner of Mellico.

Moses. [*Sings.*] Ven saw you my fader?

Ven saw you my moder?

Mrs. Flee. I see, I see; nay then I don't wonder.—

Flaw. Besides all this, Master Moses is an absolute Proteus in every elegance, at the top of the tree.

Mrs. Flee. Indeed!

Flaw. From his present dress, you would think that all his days was spent in a drawing room.

Mrs. Flee. Without doubt.

Flaw. But were you to see him on the turf at Newmarket, in his Tyburn-topp'd wig, tight boots, and a round hat, you would swear he had never handled any thing but a curry-comb since he was born. Why he has rid matches.

Mrs. Flee. Really.

Flaw. Many.

Moses. No, Madam, but vone; on my vord; a match with Lord Billy Booty, I vas first hand in hand on a canter, my Lord came side by side, give me a littel bit of chalk vid de elbow, and pop me plump into de Ditch of de Devil, and the people all hollow.

Mrs. Flee. Brutes! Very unlucky indeed. But pray, Mr. Manasses, how can I serve you, I should be happy to——

Moses. Why, Madam, in von vord, I should be glad to be as well wid the gentleman as Mr. Flaw say I be wid de ladies; and if, by your assistance, I could get into de Boodles, de Almacks, or one of de clubs.—

Mrs. Flee. Bless me, is it possible, that you are not a member!

Moses. I was often put up, but de always give me de black ball.

Mrs. Flee. Bless me! what can be the meaning of that?

Moses. I don't know; perhaps my religion was de objection.

Mrs. Flee. I should hardly think them so squeamish as that; the dice are, indeed, often called doctors; but

by the large evacuation they cause, I should rather think them graduates of physic, than of divinity. No, no, no, that can't be the case: let me see—perhaps you have had dealings with some of the club.

Moses. Yes, I have de little annuity.

Mrs. Flee. Oh, oh, so you have then been admitted into the Jerusalem chamber?

Moses. Yes, yes, very often.

Mrs. Flee. Oh, then the business is out; there then is the reason at once.

Moses. How?

Mrs. Flee. Some of the parties, I suppose, slow in their payments?

Flaw. And there is nothing those gentlemen dread so much as meeting a dun there.

Mrs. Flee. But I dare say, Mr. Manasses, at such a place, would be above dropping a hint.

Moses. Oh fie, Madam; upon no account.

Mrs. Flee. Very well; Why then I may venture to assure them as much.

Moses. Sure, vidout doubt.

Flaw. But however, Madam, tho' some of the old dons should be crusty—

Mrs. Flee. To be sure means might be used to get over that bar.

Flaw. Easy enough, I should think.

Mrs. Flee. Let us see—Stuffing the negative side of the box, that the blackballs can't descend.

Flaw. Or advancing, or retarding the clock.

Mrs. Flee. True; but then the waiters should be properly spoke to.

Flaw. Oh, I dare say Mr. Manasses does not mind upon such an occasion.

Moses. Oh not at all, I am ready to part wid de money.

Flaw. I dare say; why, you consider, that a feat there, as Mr. Manasses can manage—

Mrs. Flee. May turn out better for him, perhaps than a borough.

Moses. Den I may rely upon you, Madam.

Mrs. Flee. Give yourself no further trouble about it.

Moses. I have de honour, Ma'am—[*Going.*]

Mrs. Flee.

Mrs. Flee. But should not Manasses make a deposite?

Flaw. To be sure, Mr. Manasses. Well, Sir, I wish you joy; what we are to have a lottery, I find?

Moses. Dat is all fix'd, dere is no danger of dat, I think, Madam, dere is no finer sight can be, den to see de lottery lanterns hang up in de streets, vid large red letters write on all sides; it is so noble.

Mrs. Flee. An elegant ornament it must be confess'd to a capital city: besides, if the passion for play cannot be suppress'd, all that human wisdom can do, is, to turn private vices to the use of the public.

Moses. True, true.

Flaw. I suppose you are an adventurer?

Moses. Ay, ay; I have my share, to be sure.

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'm was saying that she had some thoughts of trying her fortune.

Moses. By all means; I wish her much luck.

Flaw. If you should have any tickets about you.

Moses. Perhaps de lady may have de fancy to de particular number.

Flaw. No, no; we are not superstitious as to the number, it is the numbers we wish to get at.

Moses. Dere is, Madam, a couple de sheets; would you give de draft on de banker? dey are, at present mush above par—Let me see—

Flaw. Oh, as to the price, we don't trouble our heads about that; we will settle that some other time: make a deduction, you know, for what Madam bestows upon the waiters.

Moses. True, true. Well, Madam, your most humble—you may tell de club dat I shall make de very good member; for now and den I love to play a little myself.

Mrs. Flee. You do?

Moses. Yes; to set de castor at hazard, and hold de Pharoah bank wid de cards.

Flaw. Be cautious, or you may meet with your match.

Moses. Never fear. Ven I way play, I always do keep myself up for de purpose, like de fighting cock, or de horse.

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Mrs. Flee. Very right, for intemperance upon such an occasion——

Moses. It would be devil; as I eats so little, and drink nothing at all.

Flaw. No!

Moses. No never? at cards de claret would turn all topsy turvy; no, no, I must take care not to drown Pharo again in de Red Sea. [Exit.

Flaw.

} Ha, ha, ha,

Mrs. Flee.

Mrs. Flee. Oh——have you advertised an honourable seat to be sold?

Flaw. I never neglect business, you know; but the perpetuating this damned bribery act, has thrown a devilish rub in our way.

Mrs. Flee. New acts, like new brooms, make a little built at first, but the dirt will return, never fear: what have no offers been made?

Flaw. A short note from a broker, who hopped out of the Alley into a good estate in the North. By the first ships, I expected some good subjects from the siege of Tanjore.

Mrs. Flee. A sure importation of candidates; they come in good time, for in such a country as this, what signifies cash without consequence?

Flaw. True; which in order to get, what they acquire by conquest, they expend in corruptions.

Mrs. Flee. Whilst, perhaps, a borough pretty warmly contested, compels the unhappy hero to make a second trip to the East. [Knock at the door.

Mrs. Flee. Who can that be?

Flaw. Had not I better withdraw?

Mrs. Flee. First see who it is.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Simony, Madam, below in a chair.

Flaw. Shew her up, by all means.

Mrs. Flee. Simony!

Flaw. The Doctor's lady, about the living, you know.

Mrs. Flee. I remember ; but I thought the Doctor himself a——

Flaw. A late mistake has made him a little cautious at present.

Mrs. Flee. A burnt child dreads the——But pray what kind of a woman is——

Flaw. An absolute gossip ; your share in the scene will be short ; but let her run on, she neither expects nor desires a reply. Here she is.

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. Madam, I am your obedient and very devoted ; Mr. Flaw, I am entirely yours. Ten thousand pardons for waiting on you in this dishabille ; but I staid so late last night at Lurch'em's assembly, that I have had but just time to huddle on my things and :—nor have I now five minutes to spare ; as I promised precisely at twelve to call on Lady Frolick, to take a turn in Kensington Gardens, to see both the Exhibitions, the Stained Glass, Dwarf Giant, and Cox's Museum. Mr. Flaw, I presume, has mentioned our little affair ; the Doctor would have waited on you himself, but men hum and ha, and are so round about, awkward and shy ; now I am always for coming plump to the point. Besides, women best understand one another, you know, but as I was saying, the Patron of the business in question, is, as we understand, a near friend, and relation of yours.

Mrs. Flee. Madam, I shall be happy to——

Mrs. Sim. Your patience, Madam, for I have not a moment to spare. Now as it can't be suppos'd, that some people should do favours for other people, with which people those people are not acquainted, I am ready to advance ; for the Doctor knows nothing about it ; quite ignorant.

Mrs. Flee. How Madam, I understood——

Mrs. Sim. The Doctor ! Not he, I assure you, Madam ; entirely ignorant in every respect. Now if such a favour can be obtained, I am ready to deposite ; as Mr. Flaw has doubtless informed you.

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Mrs. Flee. Why—I can't say, Madam, but it is very handsome.

Mrs. Sim. Nay, Madam, the party will lose no credit, by doing what is desired; the Doctor's powers are pretty well known about town; not a more populous preacher within the sound of Bow bell; I don't mean for the mobility only; those every canting fellow can catch: the best people of fashion are not ashamed to follow the Doctor; not one, Madam, of the humdrum drawling, long winded tribe; he never crams congregations, gives them more than they can carry away; not above ten or twelve minutes at most.

Mrs. Flee. Indeed!

Mrs. Sim. Even the Dowager Duchefs of Drowfy, was never known to nod at my Doctor's—and then he does not pore, with his eyes close to the book, like a clerk that reads the first lesson, not he; but all extemporary, Madam. With a cambrick handkerchief in one hand, and a diamond ring on the other; and then he waves this way, and that way, and he curtsies, and he bows, and he bounces, that all the people are ready to—But then his wig, Madam, I am sure you must admire his dear wig; not with the bushy brown buckles dangling and dragging, like a Newfoundland spaniel; but short, rounded off at the ear, to shew his plump cherry cheeks, white as a curd, feather-topp'd, and the curls as close as a colliflower.

Mrs. Flee. Why, really, Madam—

Mrs. Sim. Then my Doctor is none of your scismatics, Madam; believes in the whole thirty-nine, and so he would if there were nine times as many.

Mrs. Flee. Very obedient.

Mrs. Sim. Obedient; as humble and meek as a curate; does duly his duties, never scruples to bury tho' it be but a tradesman; unless he happens to be better engaged.

Mrs. Flee. Why with all these great qualities, I should think our success must be certain.

Mrs. Sim. With your assistance, Madam, I have not the least doubt in the world; so Madam, begging your pardon for having intruded so long, I leave Mr. Flaw

and you to confer on the subject. Not a step I beseech you; Lord bless me, I had like to have forgot; my memory, as the Doctor says, is so very tenacious it is not one time in twenty I can remember the text. Besides all I have said, my Doctor, Madam, possesses a pretty little poetical vein; I have brought you here a little hymn in my pocket.

Mrs. Flee. Madam, you are very——

Mrs. Sim. Of which the Doctor desires your opinion.

Mrs. Flee. Hymn! Then the Doctor sings, I presume.

Mrs. Sim. Not a better pipe at the playhouse; he has been long notorious for that: then he is as chearful, and has such a choice collection of songs; why he is constantly asked at the great city feasts; and does, verily believe, more in-door christenings than any three of the cloth. But this composition, Madam, is of a different kind; it is but short: but if the party, your worthy friend and relation, should happen to like the manner of writing, he has a much longer for his immediate perusal. Madam, I am your obsequious and very devoted—Not a step, my good Mr. Flaw; my chairmen are, you know, in waiting. [Exit.

Mrs. Flee. A hymn! what the deuce can the woman mean by the hymn? Let me see——*Promise to pay to the bearer, one hundred pounds for the Governor and Company*—Ay, marry, this is coming plump to the business; no man can deny, Mr. Flaw, but these lines are sterling; if the Doctor's prose is as good as his poetry, I don't wonder he has so many admirers.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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A C T II.

SCENE I. A BAGNIO.

Enter Flaw followed by Tom.

Flaw.

HAVE not you a family here, that came lately out of the country?

Tom. I suppose you mean, Sir, Mr. Aircraftle.

Flaw. I do; is the gentleman within.—

Tom. In the back dining room, up one pair of stairs.

Flaw. Will you let him know there is a person wishes to see him; if he wants to know my name—

Tom. I can tell him—

Flaw. Ay; have we been ever acquainted.

Tom. What; have you forgot Tom, Master Flaw, at the Crown and Rolls in Chancery-lane.—

Flaw. I recollect; but I thought by this time you had set up for yourself; you seem'd in a very good way.

Tom. Pretty well, Master, for that part of the town; but Lord, Sir, the penurious pence of the lawyers won't do for us, who are the superior Knights of the Napkin; after poring an hour over a six and eight-penny bill; here Tom, give us change, and mind, there is a groat for yourself; how was it possible to support a girl and a gelding upon such a two-penny tax—it could not be—

Flaw. That is true, indeed.

Tom. No, no. So dipping pretty deeply in debt, I got a friendly commission of bankruptcy to discharge my old scores, and removed to this end of the town—

Flaw. Where you thrive without doubt.

Tom. To give you a sample—It was but last night, Sir Ralph Riot mov'd, that every man in the club should

should give the waiter two guineas apiece, just by way of surprising the rascal.

Flaw. And it was carried.

Tom. Oh, nem. con ;—the members never flinch at a frolic.

Flaw. I wish you joy of your station—But pray, by what accident came the family above to your house ;—there must have been some mistake in the matter ; for they are people of very good reputation——

Tom. I can't guess ; only that the town is thin, and business begins to grow dead, we should hardly have given them admittance ; they are a strange unaccountable tribe. Pray who the deuce are they ?

Flaw. A respectable family from the County of Wilts, with a very good landed estate, I assure you.

Tom. On which I suppose the 'Squire condescends to kill his own meat ; and Madam, his lady, to dress it ; then it is one eternal wrangle between them, conducted in a language too, pretty near as coarse as their carpers.

Flaw. They have been bred in a state of Nature, Tom.

Tom. The husband for once or twice, is entertaining enough ; he sets out to inform you in a most material point, as he thinks, which he forsakes in an instant to follow some other circumstance, not material at all ; this he soon quits for another, and soon another, if you will give him attention.—He puts me in mind of a pack of hounds in a hare warren ; by eternally shifting the game, the pursuit never ends.

Flaw. You have him, Tom ; Mr. Aircastle is, I own, very prolix and digressive.

Tom. Unless I am mistaken, the son has an old acquaintance here in the house.

Flaw. Ay!

Tom. Miss Betsy Blossom, one of our ladies, who comes, I fancy, from their part of the world—She wishes to avoid the father and mother, but hints that she has good reason to remember the son——

Flaw. Perhaps so.

Tom. Madam, the mother too, who is still a jolly brisk

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Flaw. How so.

Tom. She has dispatch'd, this morning a billet to Col. Gorget, an old master of mine.

Flaw. If they are at present alone, you will be so kind to announce me——

Tom. Those stairs lead to the door; there is no occasion for a master of the ceremonies. [*Exit Flaw.*]
Miss, Miss Betsey;

Enter Betsey.

Well; have you yet encountered your Corydon?

Betsey. No; I have carefully kept myself out of his way.

Tom. Then now throw yourself into it as soon as you can; for unless you prevent it, I can foresee a design to dispose of him in a very different manner.

Betsey. In the interim, I could wish to have him all to myself; no danger of an interruption from the father or mother.

Tom. Watch then when they are out of the way; but remember you run no risk in overacting your part; treat him with a large dish of daggers, death, and despair.

Betsey. Never fear; I know how to proportion my dose.

Tom. Are you prepared with the two verses I gave you.

Betsey. Yes, yes; and I warrant will thunder them with good effect in his ears.

Tom. Success attend you, my girl.

[*Exeunt.*]

Scene changes to another Room in the Bagnio.

Mr. and Mrs. Aircastle.

Air. Well, well, mark the end on't; this will turn out like all the rest of your projects.

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Mr. Aircastle, will you never get over your grumblings; I thought I had convinc'd you before you left home, that London was the only spot for people to thrive in.

Air. Convince me ! Did not I tell you what Parson Prukenello said ; I remember Mrs. Lightfoot was by ; she had been brought to bed that day was a month of a very fine boy ; a bad birth ; for Doctor Seeton, who served his time with Luke Lancet of Guises—there was a talk about him and Nancy the daughter—she afterwards married Will. Whitlove, another apprentice who had great expectations from an old uncle in the Grenades ; but he left all to a distant relation, Kit Cable, a Midshipman aboard the Torbay—she was lost coming home in the Channel ; the captain was taken up by a coaster from Rye, loaded with cheese——

Mrs. Air. Mercy upon me, Mr. Aircastle, at what a rate you run on ; what has all this to do with our coming to London ?

Air. Why ; I was going to tell you, but you will never have patience.

Mrs. Air. More than ever woman possessed. Would you, I say, be contented now to spring, grow, and decay, in the same country spot, like a cabbage—

Air. Provided I left behind me some promising sprouts.

Mrs. Air. What ! have you no ambition, no soul !—could you be easy to stand stock still, whilst your neighbours are advancing all round you :—Cottagers are become farmers, farmers are made justices ; and folks that travelled bare-foot to London roll down in their coaches and chariots ; but still we stick——

Air. What then ? for as Counsellor Crab said at the assizes—he came down to plead for Ned Nickum, who won at Bath a large sum of Lord Luckless ; the principal witness was Christopher Cogum, who was condemn'd to the pillory, but saved by Phil Phang the attorney, who—

Mrs. Air. What matters what any body said ? but you are always flying from the——

Air. Why, what a pox would the woman be at ; have not I lopped off a handsome limb of my land to put your hopeful project in practice ?

Mrs. Air. Well, and must not every body who ventures in the lottery of life, first pay for his ticket.

Air. I believe Toby will hardly thank me for going into the wheel.

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Mrs. Air. No ; I suppose he would rather stay at home and marry Bet Blossom ; a pretty alliance he had like to have given us.

Air. But you know I drove the girl out of the parish.

Mrs. Air. Are there none of the same stamp left behind ?

Air. Well, well ; here we are ; and what's to be done ?

Mrs. Air. Our first business is to get Toby disposed of ; upon this head we will consult Mr. Flaw ; as to my affairs, leave me to myself—

Air. And as for Toby, the best method you think, will be—

Mrs. Air. To advertise the boy, to be sure.

Air. Do ye think so ?—I was once told by Tom Type, a printer of one of the papers—he was tried for a libel before Sir Philip Flog'em at the Old Bailey ; two of the jury died that sessions of the distemper—Doctor Drybones recommended vinegar by way of prevention ; the Doctor wore the strangest black wigs—they were made by Ben Block'em of Bow-street ; I dined with him once, when he was church warden, upon two bastard children ; we had a haunch of venison.

Mrs. Air. But what is all this to the purpose ?

Air. I was going to tell you, if you would but listen a bit—

Mrs. Air. What did Type say ?

Air. That he never knew any good come of that kind of—

Mrs. Air. Then Type was a fool ! Don't we see by the news that there is no other way of making matches in London.

Air. Well, well ; you know best to be sure.

Mrs. Air. Here the advertisement is ; I have penned myself ; call the boy in, and observe, Mr. Aircraftle, if he corresponds with the marks ?

Air. Toby. [Enter Toby] Lord, Mrs. Aircraftle, now you have altered the boy ; why his face is as long as a fiddle-stick ! and then he has a bundle as big as a child at his back.

Mrs. Air. Pray, Mr. Aircraftle, mind your own business,

finess, I beg; would you have him dressed like yourself, in a suit of clothes made thirty years ago, when you was sheriff to the county? Toby stand forth—*Wanted for a young gentleman of an ancient family, an agreeable person*—Toby, hold up your head.

Toby I does, Mother, I does—

Air. It is impossible my dear, the boy should ever walk in that manner; why, he will run against every body he meets—do you think, Toby, you can step without stumbling?

Toby. Not in the streets; but cross a room pretty well I believe.

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, have you no idea of grace?—Shoulders back Toby, and chest a little more out.

Air. Now child, look at his elbows; you have pinioned him down like a pickpocket.

Mrs. Air. Grace, Mr. Aircastle, grace.

Air. And his breast bone sticks out like a turkey's.

Enter Tom and Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Good folks, you are welcome to London.

Air. Ay; here we are, Mr. Flaw, here is Toby too.

Toby. Yes, here I am, Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Bless me, what a change; I should scarce have known him.

Toby. Yes; I suppose I am pretty much altered by being garnished with grace.

Air. Ay; a grace, that I believe will tempt nobody to taste of the dish.

Mrs. Air. Never mind him. Mr. Flaw, he is a desponding creature you know; but as a proof that we have not been idle, here is the first fruits of my labour.

Flaw. What is it?

Mrs. Air. An advertisement to procure a partner for Toby.

Flaw. A partner!

Mrs. Air. Ay; a wife, with a suitable fortune.

Flaw. I hope it is not sent to the papers.

Toby. What the notice where I am to be seen? Here it is in my hand.

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Mrs. Air. Give it me ; and you go out, and wait till you are wanted ; and don't listen, do you hear ; and Toby, be mindful of grace ; and do you hear, don't laugh ; you may grin, indeed, to shew your teeth and your manners. [Exit Toby.]

Flaw. Bless me, Madam ! how could such a thought—

Mrs. Air. Don't we every day see such things in the news ?

Flaw. Ay ; from an old maid in despair, a broken milliner, or a tottering tobacconist.

Air. I told her so, Mr. Flaw ; zounds, says I, you treat the boy as if he was a white bear, or an ostrich—tho' it is quite a mistake, Mr. Flaw, that those creatures eat iron ; I saw one once at the Chequer at Salisbury—the keeper had but one hand, he lost it at an engagement up the Mediterranean with a French ship, called the Soleil ; she was fitted up as a privateer by some merchants.

Mrs. Air. Did ever mortal see such a man !

Air. And zounds, why must not I speak ; she likes to listen to no sounds but her own ; but I will be heard, and——

Mrs. Air. And so you shall when you talk to the purpose.

Air. Purpose, Madam ! Damn it, I would have you to know——

Flaw. Oh fie, fie, good people, curb your cholers a little ; consider you are not now in the country.

Air. Well, well, I am calm.

Flaw. Then to return to our business ; besides, my good Madam, I had provided a match that would have compleated all your matters at once.

Mrs. Air. How ?

Flaw. A lady, an acquaintance of mine, lately arrived with her niece from the Indies.

Mrs. Air. And rich ?

Flaw. Enough to purchase the sceptre of Poland—

Air. How !

Flaw. Ay ; even before his very good neighbours had brought that monarch's kingdom down to a manor.

Air. And, pray, as to the party,—

Flaw. Fleece'm is the name of the aunt ; not much indebted to fortune ; but whoever is happy enough to marry the niece, won't scruple, I dare say, to procure her a proper provision.

Mrs. Air. The most reasonable thing in the world.

Flaw. I ventured to promise as much.

Mrs. Air. You have then hinted the business.

Flaw. As good as concluded—As marriage-bonds are illegal, it will be right to make a deposit before the solemnization.

Mrs. Air. To be sure. Now, Mr. Aircastle, I hope I was right ; foreseeing a little cash might promote our designs, I got him to sell Sycamore Farm, and we have brought the money to town.

Flaw. How much might the——

Mrs. Air. Five thousand.

Flaw. But with a few diamonds, for which I will get you credit—

Mrs. Air. By all means ; when should we wait on the young lady ?

Flaw. This very morning, we cannot be too quick ; some of the young blades about town begin to have an inkling, I fear ; I observe them throw their eyes up to the windows.

Mrs. Air. Without doubt. Mr. Aircastle, you will go out to the shops, and provide Toby with a new Beckford hat, and a cutter la chasse.

Flaw. And purchase, at the same time, a present for the lady.

Mrs. Air. The first time ?

Flaw. Always the rule in the East, you never approach a superior without a suitable present.

Mrs. Air. No !

Air. No ; why, fool that is the way the Nabobs have got all their wealth ; I knew one of them once, and if he had not been so rich, really a good sort of a—he was inoculated for the small-pox by one the Suttons at the great house by Hyde Park—the builder of it got into the Bench, and was afterwards cleared by an act of insolvency ; tho' Tom Jenkins, one of his creditors—

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Mrs. Air. You see! Lord bless me now, Mr. Air-castle, how can you—when we have not a moment to lose—go, go out with the boy, I beseech you.

Air. Well, well, well. [*Going.*]

Flaw. I will run before, and prepare Mrs. Fleece'm.

Mrs. Air. By all manner of means.

Air. Pray is not the toyshop at the end of the street, kept by the son of ——— I remember I met the father once at Newmarket; he was in a one horse chaise made by Varnish here in Long-Acre, who built a state coach for the Empress of Russia—he was recommended by Lord——I can't think of his name—who was chosen one of the Sixteen for the kingdom of——

Mrs. Air. Take him with you, dear Mr. Flaw.

Flaw. Come, Sir, I will shew you the shop.

[*Exit Air and Flaw.*]

Mrs. Air. So, having provided for Toby, I am at leisure to attend my own private concerns: who's there? [*Enter Maid.*] Bid a waiter come up. [*Exit Maid.*] If Colonel Gorget answers my letter in the way I expect, it will prove a pretty good beginning; the Colonel, I make no doubt, knows the ways of the world, and will soon take the hint; he was vastly struck with me during the races, and I don't see why I have not as good a right to profit by my person, as I am told some ladies do who live in this—[*Enter Waiter.*] Well, Sir, what return to my letter?

Wait. The Colonel, Madam, will obey your commands.

Mrs. Air. Very well; when he comes, shew him in to the next room. [*Exeunt.*]

Another Room in the Bagnio.

Enter Colonel Gorget, reading a letter.

Gorg. Bravo, bravo, my sweet country acquaintance; this is a rendezvous with a witness—Let me see, hum, hum,—unexpectedly brought by business to town—no time to make a proper provision——accommodate me with five hundred guineas. Accommodate—an apt phrase,

phrase, and a pretty sum too; but how the deuce could the woman suppose that I was able to advance such a sum? Hum, hum,—not prove ungrateful—Elizabeth—Oh, ho, now I begin to conceive—stay; who have we here? Zooks the husband himself.

Enter Mr. Aircastle.

Air. What! Colonel Gorget—

Col. Mr. Aircastle, I am happy to see you; but what important business can have brought you to London.

Air. Some family affairs, and to lay out a pretty large sum which I lately got for a parcel of land. But is this visit intended for me?

Col. No; I was quite a stranger to your being in town; a lady in the house, that I lately knew in the country—

Air. What, from our part of the world?

Col. No, no; but a devilish fine woman—Last summer, some little gallantries passed between us below—

Air. Ay, ay; you officers play the very deuce when you come down into the country—I remember Ensign Lash, about ten years ago; his father came from Barbadoes; I met him at Treacle's, the great sugar-baker's, who had a house in St. Mary Ax; he took the lease from Alderman Gingham, who served sheriff with Deputy — There was tight work on the Hustings.

Col. Oh, the Devil! he runs on at the old rate—*[aside.]* But we forgot the Lady.

Air. Oh, ay—gallantry with her below, which I suppose you have finished above.

Col. No, faith; not intirely, my friend, but I think we are in a fair way.

Air. Ay.

Col. The garrison has offered to surrender.

Air. Then what prevented you from taking possession

Col. The governor, as usual, insists on a bribe, which it was not in my power to pay; I was just stepping

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ping home to provide the credentials; but, however, this lucky meeting will, I flatter myself, put an end to my journey.

Air. As how?

Col. If you will supply me with the sum till evening, I shall close the bargain without quitting the house.

Air. How much?

Col. Five hundred guineas.

Air. Five hundred guineas! what a cormorant the woman must be.

Col. Not at all; when her husband is rich, and she is above accepting a trifle.

Air. Now, I should have thought that would have made her more reasonable.

Col. Quite the reverse; why did you ever know a wealthy courtier accept of a moderate pension?

Air. That, indeed—but are you really serious?

Col. So serious, that if you lend me the money—

Air. Nay, but Colonel, that is—

Col. Nay, but if you hesitate—

Air. No, it is not that; the money is quite at your service, but you will repent, and then reproach me—what, five hundred! there can be no woman worth it.

Col. You would alter your tone if you saw her.

Air. Should I? prithee tell me her name, perhaps I may know—

Col. I durst not; you know my honour is concerned.

Air. Honour! with such a woman as that.

Col. She is very well known.

Air. And ought to be better.

Col. But I waste time, and may lose the critical minute—will you supply me, or must I—

Air. With the greatest pleasure in life—here is in this bag the very sum, which I have just received for a draft in the city.

Col. Ten thousand thanks, my dear Mr——

Air. I can't say tho' but I am sorry——

Col. Oh, it is not impossible but I may come off at an easier rate—with such a capital in hand one may haggle you know.

Air. True, true; I'd endeavour to get her for nothing

thing: chouse her, chouse her, do Colonel; if indeed she had asked for a ring with a poesy, or any such trifle as that—but such a monstrous demand. I would give something to see her.

Col. Why it is my opinion you know who she is.

Air. Really.

Col. Now if it should turn out that you had been happy with the lady yourself, would not that greatly surprise you?

Air. Me! ha, ha; the deuce a bit: tho' when I came first to the Temple, there was a lawyer's wife that lived in Quality-Court—next door, I recollect, to Ralph Rentroll—receiver for some large estates in the North—his last lady was daughter to Sims the dry salter—who was the first bankrupt after the statute—his principal creditor was—

Col. Oh, the Devil! But consider time passes, I must away to the lady.

Air. True, true; and I to the shops with my boy, and happy with the ha, ha, ha—However, if that be the case, Colonel, it is a stronger reason for closing your purse strings; for the Devil take me if I ever knew a woman who was deserving a tythe of that sum in my life; unless, indeed, a Greek girl they called Circassian; I saw her at Tunbridge, where, by the by, they have the walk made of pantiles. *[Exit Mr. Air.]*

Col. This is lucky beyond expectation; what a civilised husband to supply me with the very money I wanted. *[Enter Tom.]* Is the lady at leisure?

Tom. She knows her husband is gone out, and will be with you this instant.

Col. Very well; take care, and watch his return.

Tom. Here she is. *[Exit Tom.]*

Enter Mrs. Aircraftle.

Mrs. Air. What, you are come, my dear Colonel? I have waited for you with the utmost impatience.

Col. And I, Madam, have flown to obey your commands.

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Mrs. Air. No more of that Colonel, I beg. I blush to consider——

Col. Blush! and why so, Madam?

Mrs. Air. At what you must think of my letter——but the high sense I entertain of your friendship, induced me in such an exigence to make trial.

Col. And the wisest step you could take.

Mrs. Air. Pardon me, Sir, I am not to learn how dangerous it is to have an obligation to you.

Col. And why so? Can there be any thing more natural than to desire the assistance of the persons who love us——of my attachment you have no reason to doubt.

Mrs. Air. That, Sir, is the very source of my sorrow; and has determined me to support every evil; nay, to apply even to Mr. Aircastle himself, rather than——

Col. How, Madam! then it is plain, I have lost your esteem. Fool that I was to be lulled by the bewitching lines of your letter—I thought I had detected Love, that sly lurcher, lurking under the mask of confidential—but now I unfortunately find how far I am from your favour.

Mrs. Air. Cruel, unjust Colonel Gorget.

Col. Ha! am I unjust; you revive me; you restore me to—but banish every thought of an obligation to any but me—I should be jealous if——

Mrs. Air. But really, Colonel, the sum is——

Col. Of no importance at all—a mere trifle—just nothing—I shall not feel it, believe me.

Mrs. Air. How can I be too grateful for such a generous proof of your friendship. Sure you was born to——[*Enter Toby.*] What the deuce has brought that booby back. [*Aside.*]

Toby. Father desires you would call in your way, and take him up at the sword cutler's.

Col. How! the young cub! This is lucky beyond expectation—here, Madam, are the five hundred guineas, which you will be kind enough to pay, with my thanks to Mr. Aircastle, your husband.

Mrs. Air. Finely taken and turned—what infinite wit and

and contrivance [*aside.*] But would it not be right, Colonel, just to sign a receipt.

Col. Unnecessary, Madam ; but just as you please.

Mrs. Air. There is pen and ink in the room over head.

Col. Give me leave to conduct you. [*Exeunt.*]

Toby. I don't understand what father and mother's about. Here am I dizoned and skewered, and graced, just like a young colt that is breaking ; nay, they were going to advertise me too, as if I was really a horse ; but lawyer Flaw has made them alter their mind, and I am to be dispos'd of by private contract, I think ; I can't say that I am over fond of their ways——Oh poor Betsey Blossom ! Let them match me to whoever they will, I shall never love any like thee ; I believe I should have put an end to their project, if I could have but found——hey ! who is this ? mercy on me, sure it must be her ghost ! and yet that can't be, because ghosts. they say, never come but at night. Betsey.

Enter Betsey Blossom.

Bloss. Master Toby.

Toby. But is it possible, can it be you ?

Bloss. As you see.

Toby. Well, and how ? Lord I have a thousand questions to ask you——Where hast been, how dost do, how comest here ; why you are vast fine, Betsey, all of a sudden ; you be not married ?

Bloss. Married ; no, no ; you have put that out of my power you know——

Toby. Me ! how so, Mrs. Betsey ?

Bloss. Is that a question now to be asked ; have you so soon forgot what has happened between us ?

Toby. No, no ; I remember some part pretty well, I believe ; but you cannot come for to go to say, that we ever went to church together, in that there way you mean.

Bloss. That ceremony, Mr. Toby, you know well was all that was wanting.

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Toby, Besides, it could not be, Mrs. Betsey, because why, as father says, since the parliament house interfered, it is against the law to marry for love.

Bloss. How ! What are all your vows, oaths, promises forgot ; does not this sixpence, broken between us, when we last met in the grove, stare you full in the face ?

Toby. Yes ; I have the other half in my pocket.

Bloss. Does not your conscience, Mr. Toby, upbraid you ? But men are all traitors alike, their whole study is to delude poor innocent maids. Oh ! why did I trust that fair face and flattering tongue, and not suspect the wily serpent that was lurking beneath.

Toby. Nay Betsey—

Bloss. But my prayers are granted ; however, my only wish was to see you once more—

Toby. My sweet dear little Betsey.

Bloss. Once more to survey that sweet form—the business of life is now over—eyes take your last look—open your cold earth to receive me.

Toby. Lord of mercy ! if you don't frighten me out of my wits.

Bloss. To thy dreary mansion I come—there my sorrows will cease, and my shame, and name be forgiven by the unpitying—Oh ! [*faints.*]

Toby. Stop, Stop, dearest Betsey, and take me along with you—Murder, fire, water ! what will no body come to assist her.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Bless me, Sir ! what can be the matter ?

Toby. Why, here is a poor young creature at her last gasp—clap her hand, and bend her forward a bit.

Tom. Miss Betsey,—mercy on us ! how came this about ?—It is only a fit—she revives, her eyes begin to open a little.

Bloss. Where am I ?

Toby. In the fore-room, up one pair of stairs.

Tom. Bless me, Sir, what can be the occasion of this ?

Toby. Why it is a young woman that is breaking her heart.

Tom. Her heart ! and for what ?

Toby.

Toby. Why for love of me, to be sure.

Tom. And can you be such a barbarian? why you must have the heart of a tyger, to stand unshocked at such a horrible scene.

Toby. Nay, I have been shocked enough, if that is all.

Tom. Then why don't you remove her distress.

Toby. Why, she wants me to marry her.

Tom. And is that all she asks; and can you hesitate for such a trifle as that?

Toby. Why, how can I, when father and mother have promised me to an Indian woman, as rich as a Jew, from beyond sea?

Bloss. How! and have I a rival? perjured monster; but think not my death shall finally close our account; my shade, like Margaret's grimly ghost, shall pursue thee; haunt thee in dreams at midnight; shake thy curtains round thy guilty head, halloa in thy ear.

*Bethink thee Toby, of thy fault,
Thy pledge and broken oath;
And give me back my maiden's vow,
And give me back my troth.*

Toby. Take it with you, Mrs. Betsey, when ever you please.

Bloss. [Sings.]

*For this I haunt thy midnight dreams,
And hover round thy bed;
Thy ears I'll fill with horrid screams,
Nor leave thee till thou art dead.*

Toby. Why you won't go to be so cruel, I hope; what is there no amends to be made?—

Tom. So, Sir, you see, dead or alive she is determined to plague you.

Toby. Yes, yes; I see well enough—Lord! who could have thought it?—she is mightily changed since her coming to London.

Tom. This town is apt to open the mind.

Toby. Is it? I hope it will shut again though, when she gets into the country. But pray, Mr. What-d'ye-call-em, by what chance did Betsey come here?

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Tom. My mistress took her out of compassion ; it is wonderful how charitable a lady she is ; why, we have five or six more young women herein the same situation.

Toby. Indeed ! she must be the most goodest woman on earth ; well if she don't go to heaven, what chance has such a poor creature as I.

Tom. None at all, unless you repair the wrongs she has suffered.

Toby. But if I was minded to comply with her wish, I don't see how I can bring it about ?

Tom. You are one and twenty, no doubt.

Toby. These three years and above.

Tom. And Miss.

Toby. Within a twelvemonth of me.

Tom. Oh, then I will manage matters I warrant—— where are you going ?

Toby. To call on father, at a shop near the old blackman a horseback ; the wind has blown his hat from his head.

Tom. Very well ; give him the slip as soon as you can ; run back here, you will find us.——

Bloss. What is he a-going—Oh !——

Toby. Nay, Betsey, be quiet ; ben't I ready to do all that you want ? If you faint any more, I wish I may die if I'll have you.

Bloss. Won't you.

Toby. No.

Tom. Courage, Miss, keep up your——

Toby. Right, Mr.———or———if she must faint, can't she wait till I get out of the house. [Exit Toby.

Tom. He is off ; finely managed—do not stir from hence—I will run to the Commons, and be back again in a—one kiss as a reward for the part I have——

Enter Toby.

Toby. I forgot to ask, Sir, where I should——

Tom. Run, here Sir, she is fainting again——

Toby. Is she ? then call somebody else, for I will make the best of my way—— [Exit.

Tom. } Ha, ha, ha—

Bloss. } [Exeunt.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE I. Fleece'm and Flaw.

Flaw.

THEY will all be here immediately, so take care we are not interrupted.

Mrs. Flee. As they are so exceedingly credulous, the business will soon be dispatched.

Flaw. In a trice; I have stipulated that your provision shall be secured before the solemnization.

Mrs. Flee. Right, right; perfectly right.

Flaw. But have you properly prepared the girl for the purpose?

Mrs. Flee. Her part will be easy.

Flaw. True; but she should be adroit; as events may arise, that will require some little skill: who the duce have you got?

Mrs. Flee. Why, I considered that as a very ticklish point; it would be dangerous to trust, and difficult to find in this town a suitable object: don't you think that the black girl I brought with me from Boston——

Flaw. The negro; zounds! her complexion will betray her at once.

Mrs. Flee. I thought of an expedient to secure us from that.

Flaw. It is true, these people have no great penetration; but what we do——

Mrs. Flee. Must quickly be done: I will just speak to the girl. [*Calls.*] Marianne.

Enter Black.

Mar. What you want Missy?

Mrs. Flee. Go in and throw yourself on the bed; and, do you hear, let the window be shut; and the curtains drawn exceedingly close.

Mar. Yes Missy.

Mrs. Flee.

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Mrs. Flee. And whoever speaks to you, don't you chatter and talk, but sigh now and then, as if you was sick— You will be only asked a question or two; as, if you are ill, or are better; to which you need say nothing but yes.

Mar. Nothing but is. I take care, Missy, never you fear.

Mrs. Flee. And, Marianne—no candle.

Mar. No, no, Missy.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. Flee. Oh, she will answer our purpose I warrant—besides, unless they are very pressing to see her, there will be no occasion to produce her at all.

Flaw. But I beg your pardon, there will: by my directions, the son is provided with presents, with a view to propitiate his Venus.

Mrs. Flee. [*rap at the door.*] There they are Mr. Flaw, you will receive 'em; it will be right for me to retire, to see if all things within are in order. [*Exit. Fleece'm.*]

SCENE II.

Enter Mr. Aircraftle, Mrs. Aircraftle, Flaw, and Toby.

Air. I tell you the boy is an absolute sight, and I should not wonder if the young lady was to—

Mrs. Air. You wonder! and pray who made you a judge of the proper—

Flaw. Hush, hush, for heaven's sake hush; consider where you are?

Air. She is at old tricks, Mr. Flaw, there is no—

Flaw. A key lower, good Sir, if you please. You will frighten the family.

Air. By her good will I should never open my mouth, but to eat.

Mrs. Air. I know little else it is good for.

Flaw. Nay, Madam; now you are as faulty as he—only think what a strange impression this will make on the ladies within—I beg you will suspend your warfare a while.

Mrs. Air. Well, well.

Flaw.

Flaw. And no contradiction, I beg; but be attentive and polite to each other as people of fashion would be; you may renew hostilities, and make up for lost time, as soon as you are out of the house.

Mrs. Air. Why, how is it my fault, Mr. Flaw?

Air. Nor shall it be mine, for man and wife to quarrel before folks is rather rudish I own; by ourselves, indeed, it is a pretty innocent amusement enough—Tom Testy of our town used to say—his wife was a Devonshire girl, if I am not mistaken, from Plymouth; where, by the by, they have the best John Dories in England—Old Quin, one summer, went thither on purpose——

Flaw. And if, Mr. Aircraftle, you would contract your conversation a little—to be sure your manner is pleasing, and full of instruction, but as we met upon business——

Air. I believe you are right, Mr. Flaw. Come, my love, let us shew him how polite we can be if we please—Dear Mrs. Aircraftle, how I admire your taste these here skirts of the boy's are so light and genteel, and so airy——

Mrs. Air. True; I am happy, my dear, that I have your approbation—these we got made in the country, trapes and dangle like a parcel of petticoats.

Air. Right, my love; for all the world just like a spider, nothing but legs—a mere a couple of stilts; and then that top to his wig—my dear child——

Mrs. Air. Gives a fashionable turn to his face, and then adds to the height.

Air. It has indeed, my soul, a prodigious happy effect—a block, popping out of a hair cutter's window up two pair of stairs in the Strand; and then that bunch at his back——

Flaw. Hush, here comes the lady.

SCENE III.

Enter Mrs. Fleec'em.

This, Madam, is the family for whom I told you I had so warm an affection, and this the young gentleman whose alliance I recommend for Miss. *Mrs. Air.*

Mrs. Air. Grace, Toby.

Mrs. Flee. I make no doubt, Madam, but my niece will think herself happy in a union with so accomplished a person.

Air. Why, as to that, Toby, Mrs. — What is the gentlewoman's name?

Flaw. Mrs. Fleece'm.

Air. I recollect, Madam, going some years ago with one of that name in a stage-coach to York—we were overturned about a mile beyond Newark—the parson of the parish—he became afterwards a prebend of Worcester, in the room of old Walter Wench'em, who was cast in a suit of *crim. con.* by Sir Timothy Tallyho, remarkable for the best pack of hounds in the country.

Mrs. Air. For heaven's sake, Mr. Aircastle.

Flaw. Have a care, you have forgot.

Air. I am dumb.

Mrs. Flee. Pray, Madam, has the young gentleman travelled.

Mrs. Air. Who, Toby?

Air. Why, Madam, I did once intend—but Sir Roger Ramble, who I am told will be strongly opposed next election for the borough of Barnstable, by Sir Walter Win'em, who during the whole time of Sir Robert Walpole's administration——

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I beg pardon, but the lady directed the question to me——

Air. True my angel; and I am sure nobody can give a better answer than dear Mrs. Aircastle.

Mrs. Air. You are very polite.

Air. But I was willing to save you the trouble, my soul.

Mrs. Air. I shall think it no trouble to satisfy the lady's enquiries.

Mrs. Flee. Nay, it was a matter of curiosity only; there is, besides, an elegance, a *je ne sçai quoi* in your son's air, that is rarely acquired in this country.

Mrs. Air. Did not I tell you, the prodigious power of grace. Pray, Madam, is the young lady at home.

Mrs. Flee. Just lain down for a little; the change of
Vol. II. N climate

climate has given her a slight indisposition ; but a few days, I dare say, will restore her.

Mrs. Air. Miss, I presume, has a physician.

Air. Physician, my life, for a little sea sickness—why Doctor Diet, at Margate, who by the by intends to settle in London ; his aunt, Major Mortar's widow, who was killed by a bomb at the taking of Goree—Tom Truant, an old schoolfellow of mine was close by his side—Tom Tru——

Mrs. Air. Dear Mr. Aircastle, what has this to do with the young lady's illness.

Air. I was coming to that, my soul ; if you will let me—I dont know, it happens in general, nobody is better bred than Mrs. Aircastle ; but to day she won't let me bring out a word—so, Madam, Tom Truant, as I——

Mrs. Air. Mr. Aircastle, I must interrupt you.

Air. You must !

Mrs. Air. I can't suffer it upon this lady's account.

Air. It was for her sake, my soul, I was speaking—so Madam, Tom True——

Mrs. Air. If you persist, I shall quit the house, I assure you.

Air. Quit the house !

Mrs. Air. This very instant.

Air. Zounds, Madam ! if you come to that, you may go to the——

Mrs. Air. Any where to get rid of your absurd——

Air. For that matter you can't be more willing than me.

Mrs. Air. Then, Madam, I take my leave.

Sir. When you will—this lady and I can easily settle matters without you—so, Madam—as I was saying, Tom——

Flaw. For heaven's sake Sir—Mrs. Aircastle be calm ; when things are just bringing to bear——

Air. All I meant was for the service of Miss——

Flee. Very obliging, indeed ; I should be very sorry if any difference should arise on my Niece's account ; besides, her illness is so trifling, that the young gentleman

man may, if he pleases, step into the other room to enquire after her health——

Mrs. Air. Toby will be very happy I am sure ; you see, Madam, what the lad is.

Flee. A most agreeable youth, I must own ; and then his silence is a modest mark of his merit.

Air. Do you hear that, Mrs. Aircastle ?

Mrs. Air. Yes ; and hope it will make a proper impression on you.—You, doubtless, know the taste of your Niece ; may we hope that Toby has any chance of succeeding.

Flee. She was prodigiously pleased with Mr. Flaw's account of his parents—which indeed I now find to be true in every respect.

Air.

Mrs. Air.

} Oh, Madam—

Flee. And as to fortune, she is totally careless in that, her own being much more than sufficient.

Air. What a generous manner of thinking——Miss Patty Plumb of Jamaica did the very same ; they say her grandfather was transported——

Mrs. Air. But as to his figure, Madam, do you apprehend it will strike her,——Toby hold up your head.

Flee. I can see no reason against it ; indeed, the young gentleman has rather a fairer complexion than what she has been commonly used to ; the natives of India, from their climate, have rather a fallower hue.

Mrs. Air. True, Madam.

Flee. But, if necessary, that may be easily altered by art ; some saffron or snuff, just skimn'd over his face.

Mrs. Air. Quickly.

Air. Take my box ; it may be done in an instant.

Flee. Their hair too, is most commonly dark ; but a little German blacking here on each of the eyebrows——

Toby. If burnt cork will do, I have one here in my pocket.

Air. Mr. Flaw, will you ring for a candle.

Flee. There is no necessity now ; we have been obliged to shut out the light, as her eyes are rather tender and weak, with looking so long on nothing but water.

Mrs. Air. True, Madam ; well Madam, we will

detain you no longer—I am sure it is impossible to say how much we are obliged—you may rely upon it, we shall ever be grateful.

Flee. I don't in the least doubt it—Mr. Flaw has I presume, hinted my situation.

Mrs. Air. Most minutely—Mr. Aircraftle has prepared the deposite—you have the needful.

Air. All but five hundred pounds, which you may have in the evening; I lent it just now to a——the story will make you laugh, I am sure; as I was going out Colonel —— commanded last war——

Mrs. Air. Is this a time for a story.

Flaw. Fie; dispatch, Mr. Aircraftle.

Mrs. Air. Here all the bills are.

Flaw. Nay; hold a little, I beg; this you know is a kind of compact, there are conditions to be performed on both sides; therefore the money should, I think, be lodged in neutral hands, till the material point is complied with.

Mrs. Air. There is no occasion.

Flee. I can have no objection, I am sure; where then shall we place it?

Mrs. Air. Mr. Flaw is a friend to both parties—

Air. True; the properest man in the world.

Flee. I am not quite so certain of that. [*Aside.*]

Air. There there the bills are, Mr. Flaw.

Mrs. Air. Now we will leave Toby and the lady together.

Air. Toby, don't forget to deliver the presents.

Toby. I have them here in a box.

Air. Mind your wits, my good lad; I wish we had time tho' to doctor his face against the next meeting—I will do it myself—I will manage that matter I warrant—I learnt the art last autumn of a parcel of strollers; they had been playing, during the dog days, with one Foote in this town—a fellow, they say, takes people off, and——

Mrs. Air. Nay, Mr. Aircraftle, come along I beseech you.

Air. Well, well, you are always in such a damnable hurry.

Flee.

Flee. Mr. Flaw ; you are not going, I hope ; because I wanted just to speak a few words——

Flaw. I shall be back in a minute.

[*Exit* Flaw, Mr. and Mrs. Aircastle.

Flee. This, Sir, this is the door ; tread softly.

Toby. Had I not better pull off my shoes ?

Flee. No occasion for that. [Exeunt.

SCENE changes. Marianne in Bed.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'm and Toby.

Flee. This way ; your hand——Letty, my dear, the young gentleman I mentioned to you this morning, begs just to enquire after your health——there, I will leave you together——she is in the bed at the upper end of the room——I make no doubt, Sir, but you will behave with proper decorum. [Exit.

Toby. If you are afraid, you need not go out of the room——The place is as dark as a dungeon——upper end of the room ; and how the deuce should I know which that is in the night. I can tell you, I should be a good deal frightened to be so much in the dark, but it is well enough in the day, when one is about to make love ; because why, one is not so bashful and shy, one can see to speak one's mind with more boldness and courage, than in the light——me, Miss ; I thought she had spoke ; may be not——If I could but get hold of the curtains——the best way will be to creep close by the wall——then I shall be sure to——Miss——Miss.

Mar. Who be dat dere.

Toby. I——dat dere ; one may find out by her tongue she is a foreigner——I am pretty right now, I believe ; what, Miss, are you sick ?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. But you are better, I hope ?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. I am glad on't ; then I suppose, Miss, if you please, I may begin to make love ?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. Yes ; gad I think it is ready made to my hands ;

did the gentlewoman, Madam, your aunt, say any thing about and concerning of me?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. Is it a secret?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. Oh, then it would not be manners to ax; well Miss, I hope you ben't averse to the match?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. Adzooks then, we are all off in an instant; what, Miss, I suppose you bent willing to have me?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. Oh, then we are on again as before—then I may produce, I believe—I have brought you, Miss, some curiosities, by way of presentation, here in my pocket;—will you please to accept?—

Mar. Yes.

Toby. Here, then, I offer them up to the shrine of thy beauty; may I crave leave to kiss your lily white hand?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. On my knees let me thank you, fairest creature—her skin is vast soft—they be wonderful pretty things I have brought you—a'n't you mighty curious to see them?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. May I draw the curtain a bit, only just to give a glimpse?

Mar. Yes.

Toby. So I will—I should be glad to take a peep at her too; she is a mighty agreeable body; does not talk much, indeed, but is vast sensible, whatever she says—this, I believe, is the string—I wonder if she is as handsome as Betsy Blossom—gad, if she is, Miss Blossom must look out for somebody else I can tell her—that's high enough I believe—that there thing in the leather case is a watch; if you touch the nob that juts out, it strikes all the world like a clock; Mother has one, but then him is as big as a warming pan; perhaps Miss, you may'n't find the trick out, I'll shew you—hey! what is this? Lord have mercy on me, she is

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turned all of a sudden as black as a crow—sure as can be a judgment for forsaking poor Betsey.

Mar. Massa, won't you come here?

Toby. Not I.

Mar. I come to you.

Toby. The devil you will; you must run pretty fast then—keep off me—holloa house; stop the black thing that is hard at my— [Exit.

S C E N E V.

Enter Mrs. Fleece'em.

Flee. The rude puppy had like to have run over me; what is the meaning—Ha, the curtain drawn up; nay then—Marianne, who opened the window?

Mar. Little Massa; to shew me de tick, tick—

Flee. Fool, did not I tell you—but it was my own fault to trust such an ideot; go, get out of my sight. [Exit *Mar.*

Enter Flaw.

Flaw. What the deuce is the matter? Toby is scampered down street as if he had a legion of—

Flee. Matter! why he has discovered the wench.

Flaw. S'death; I told you the folly of trusting these—we shall all be blown up in an instant—I saw the mother stop her chariot at the sight of the whelp; so I suppose we shall have her back in a—

Flee. Ay; then something must be suddenly done.

Flaw. Done, but what!—I'll run after the boy, and hear his account of the matter.

Flee. Stay; had not you better, Mr. Flaw, just leave with me Mr. Aircraftle's deposit.

Flaw. Pooh! time enough; is this a season to settle accounts?

Flee. So; I suppose he will march off with the money at last; I would have done as much if I could have touched it.

Enter Mrs. Aircraftle.

Mrs. Air. Dear Madam, I am in the utmost confusion; I am afraid that wild boy has misbehaved himself in some manner or other——

Flee. A little mistake, Madam; but I protest my niece is so terrified, that she is unable to give me any account.

Mrs. Air. Some rude prank of his, I dare say; I never could get his father——

Enter Colonel Gorget.

Col. The house is in such a confusion, that I can't get any body to give me an answer—*Mrs. Aircraftle!*

Mrs. Air. Bless me, Colonel Gorget! who thought of meeting you here?

Col. An odd affair; but this lady, I suppose, *Mrs. Fleece'em*, will be so kind to explain it. A pretty young lad, an ensign of mine, has, I am afraid, been tricked out of a large sum of money by one *Flaw*—a fellow of very bad fame.

Mrs. Air. How? *Flaw*——

Col. Under the pretence of gaining promotion by this lady's assistance.

Flee. Mine, Sir! I promise you this is the first mention I ever heard of the matter.——

Col. Just, Madam, as I suspected; but pray, *Mrs. Aircraftle*, have you long had the honour of this lady's acquaintance——

Mrs. Air. Acquaintance! Lord, Colonel, I am terrified out of my wits—your ear for a moment.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A note, Madam, which you are desired directly to read.

Flee. *Flaw's* hand. [*reads.*] *The game is up—we are blown—make off as fast as you can.* As matters stand, the best advice I can take. [*Going off.*

Mrs.

Mrs. Air. Madam, you are not going to leave us ?

Flee. Just only to enquire how my niece does after her fright ? I shall be immediately back.

Col. How ! Is it possible ? a capital sum ? good heavens, Madam ! and how could you trust it without consulting some friend ?

Mrs. Air. Why, we both thought Mr. Flaw—

Col. Flaw ! an infamous——

Enter Mr. Aircastle.

Air. Why, what the deuce has been the matter amongst you ? They tell me Toby has been at home, frightened out of his wits ; and then directly run out with the waiter and some wench or other—I have sent your Roger in search of the whelp.—Ah, Colonel are you there ?

Col. Came the minute before you.

Air. Well, Colonel, hey, how ! What, I suppose, by being here so soon, your affair has miscarried.

Col. You are indeed mistaken, my good friend.

Mrs. Air. What affair ?

Air. I forgot to tell it you, child ; of a fine lass in this town that sets up her person for sale.

Mrs. Air. How ?

Air. And had the modesty to fix the price to the Colonel at five hundred guineas.

Mrs. Air. Abominable ! can there be such creatures ?

Air. Ask the Colonel, that is all ; an infamous harpy.

Col. Dear Mr. Aircastle, you are here in an error.

Air. Error ! why did not you tell me of a line she sent you ?

Col. Very true.

Air. And did not I advance the cash ?

Col. Do I pretend to deny it.

Air. Well then.

Col. Your patience a moment, my dear friend : gave her money it is true.

Air. There, Mrs. Aircastle, did not I tell you——

Col. But then like a woman of honour——

Air. Well.

Col. She told me that she did it, but to try the strength of my passion——

Air. Paw, paw——

Col. And so immediately returned it again.

Air. Pshaw! A bam, Mrs. Aircastle, don't believe it, my dear.

Col. To put the matter out of dispute, I returned it to your lodging directly; when not finding you, I delivered the cash to your lady.

Air. Indeed!

Col. In the very individual bag that you gave me; and before master Toby your son.

Air. Ay, and have you got the money, my dear.

Mrs. Air. Yes, yes, I received it——Was ever woman so duped, but this town is full of cozeners. [*Aside.*

Col. I am afraid, Mr. Aircastle, that it was pretty lucky for you I happened to have the cash in my hand.

Air. Lucky! I don't understand——

Col. Otherwise it might have flown with the rest.

Air. Flown away——

Col. By what Mrs. Aircastle has told me, I shrewdly suspect you are got into the hands of some villainous sharpers.

Air. How?

Col. Mr. Flaw and his coadjutrix——within——who's there?——But we shall soon get the business explained.

Enter a Servant.

Col. Do you live with the person who inhabits this house?

Serv. But a very short time.

Col. We wish to see her here directly——

Serv. She is gone out.

Col. I thought so; and her niece too, I suppose?

Serv. Her niece, Sir!

Col. Ay.

Serv. I know no niece she has.

Air.

Mrs. Air. } How!——

Col.

Col. Just as I suspected : now, Sir, do you begin to find what a situation you are in.

Air. Then I am totally ruined ; I told you, Mrs. Air-castle, what would come of your—Martin Money-trap, of the Minorities, was once in the very same way, he was taken in by a Portuguese Jew——

Col. A truce to recrimination, I beg ; we have more material business in hand : let this woman be directly pursued, and endeavour to recover at least a part of—

[*O'Flannagan without.*

O'Flan. Pray step in a bit if you please ; and refund freely the bill—or, upon my soul, I'll make you do me the favour by force.

All. Mrs. Fleece'em.

O'Flan. Yes, yes, it is sure enough—she overtook me as I met her heard by.

Col. We are obliged to you then for the lady's return.

O'Flan. You may say that—I stopped her just in the nick, as she was sily walking off in a coach—Arrah, put off your hood my dear honey ; don't be shame-faced amongst your friends and acquaintance.

Mrs. Flee. Stand off, you rude brute——

O'Flan. Better words, if you please—you wanted to send me to be feathered abroad, so in return I shall beg leave, madam, to pluck you at home.

Col. No violence to the lady, I beg, Sir ; she now finds she is detected, and, I dare say, will do every body all the justice she can—and first, madam, as to the capital sum which you had the address to obtain from this——

Mrs. Flee. What concern have I in the business ; the gentlemen himself gave it into the possession of Flaw.

Col. Mr. Aircastle.

Air. That's true, I confess——

Col. But, since that, has not the property suffered a transfer ?

Mrs. Flee. Not to me ; if you doubt it, you may search the house where you please.

Col. Then it has got into worse hands I'm afraid.

Enter

Enter Mrs. Simony.

Mrs. Sim. I see by their confusion my information was right. Not to interrupt you, Madam, I should take it as a particular favour if you would immediately return the little note I left in your hands—for I have not a moment to spare.

Mrs. Flee. Note, Madam! what note? I recollect, indeed, a hymn that you——

Mrs. Sim. Well, Madam that hymn if you please.

Mrs. Flee. I gave it directly to Flaw, to get a friend of his to set it to music——

Mrs. Sim. Music! Ladies and gentlemen, a bank note, I protest.

Col. And pray, Madam, what could induce you to trust that woman with a bank note?

Mrs. Flee. That she will not readily own; a little earnest of a much larger bribe, to procure her husband a living.

Col. How, Madam, I hope your husband was not apprised of this application?

Mrs. Sim. The Doctor was totally ignorant; knew nothing about it.

Col. I am very happy to hear it; I should be sorry to find that a gentleman, whose peculiar duty it is to sustain the purity of his profession, should himself be the very person to soil it; or that an office of so sacred a nature, should be solicited by such unsanctified means.

Mrs. Sim. I believe my Doctor, Sir, will be hardly suspected; but I have not time to say more for the present; I shall be stay'd for, and have not a moment to spare. [Exit.]

Col. Let her go; that plunder, however, is fair.

Air. Well, well, but, Colonel, notwithstanding all that you say, I have heard there was a bet once made between the patron of a living and one Parson Plurality—Plurality had been a Presbyterian—his father keeps a pastry-cook's shop in Spring Gardens; just where Cox's Museum is; who, they tell me, will get devilish rich by his lottery—

Col.

Col. But if we don't use some dispatch, I am afraid you will get devilish poor.

Air. That's true enough as you say—Oh, here is Roger.

Enter Roger.

Well, did you find out where Toby is?

Roger. Yes, yes, I found un out ; and in sweet company too.

Mrs. Air. Company !

Roger. A clergyman, Betsey Blossom, and our waiter at home.

Air. Zounds ! I hope the boy is not married.

Roger. No ; but they would have been, if I had not come just in the nick to fetch him away.

Air. Where is he ?

Roger. In a shop at the corner—I wanted un to step over, but he would not, because why, he says as how the house is haunted.

Air. There was the manor-house in the parish of Paddington, Mrs. Aircastle, you may remember it formerly like enough, belonged to the Jessups, but by the marriage of the heiress with one of the Haslewoods——

Col. Come, come, it is a lucky prevention ; and to give you a little consolation, I believe I shall be able to recover your money from Flaw.

Mrs. Air. } How, Colonel ?

Air.

Col. I took the liberty, by way of prevention, to get him secured for the money received from my ensign.

Air. Indeed !

Col. And, as this affair is of a pretty criminal nature, he will think himself happy to escape by restoring the plunder.

Mrs. Air. My kind Colonel.

Col. I hope, Madam, this will make you amends for your disappointment in the five hundred pounds.

[*Aside.*

O'Flan. But what the devil is all this to my bill ?

Col.

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[*Aside.*

O'Flan. But what the devil is all this to my bill ?

Col.

Col. Did this woman receive it?

Mrs. Flee. Flaw had it, but it wants some days of being due.

Col. Then we shall be able to stop the payment at least ; it is safe, never fear——

O'Flan. That's lucky, however, and by all I can hear, my best way, Mr. Colonel, will be to make an emigration back to Ireland again.

Col. By all means ; and by this time, many more of your countrymen would, I believe, be glad to follow your steps.

O'Flan. Like enough.

Air. And if, Mrs. Aircastle, we were to return back again——

Col. It would be the wisest thing you could do.

Mrs. Air. What to vegetate like a parcel of plants.

Air. Ay, Madam ; for there are trees that won't bear transplanting ; they thrive best in their natural soil.

Col. That is the first sentence I ever heard him finish.

[*Aside.*] Well observed.—You, Madam, [*Te Mrs. Fleece'm*] till you have made all the satisfaction you can, must be contented to suffer a little confinement, after which, unless your country should have some other call upon you, you may dispose of yourself as you please.

Mrs. Flee. I am detected, distressed, and must therefore submit ; but, gentlemen, if all who have offended like us, were like us produced to the public, much higher names would adorn the Old Bailey Chronicle than those of poor Fleece'em and Flaw.

14 NO33

F I N I S

THE
K N I G H T S.

A
Comedy in Two A C T S.



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P R E F A C E.

AS this is the last opportunity I shall have of addressing the Public this year, I think it my duty to return them my warmest acknowledgments for their favourable reception of the following little piece.

The three principal characters I met with in a Summer's expedition ; they are neither vamp'd from antiquated plays, pilfer'd from *French* farces, nor the baseless beings of the Poet's brain. I have given them in their plain natural habit ; they wanted no dramatic finishing ; nor can I claim any other merit than grouping them together, and throwing them into action. The justice done them there by the performers, has been too strongly distinguish'd by the town, to render any thing from me necessary : I could only wish that the managers of the theatres would employ Mr. *Castallo*, whose peculiar naïveté, and strict propriety, would greatly become many characters of our stage.

PRO-



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P R O L O G U E.

Written and spoken by MR. FOOTER.

HAPPY my Muse, had she first turn'd her art,
From Humour's dangerous path, to touch the heart.
They, who in all the bluster of blank verse,
The mournful tales of love, and war, rehearse ;
Are sure the critics censure to escape,
You hiss not heroes now, you only——gape.
Nor, (strangers quite to heroes, kings, and queens,)
Dare you intrude, your judgment, on their scenes.
A different lot the comic muse attends,
She is oblig'd, to treat you with your friends ;
Must search the court, the forum, and the city ;
Mark out the dull, the gallant and the witty,
Youth's wild profusion, th' avarice of age ;
Nay, bring the pit itself, upon the stage.
First to the bar, she turns her various face ;
Hem, my lord, I am council in this case,
And if so be, your lordship should think fit,
Why to be sure, my client must submit ;
For why, because—then off she trips again,
And to the sons of commerce, shifts her scene :
There, whilst the griping fire, with moping care,
Defrauds the world, himself, t'enrich his heir,
The pious boy, his father's toil rewarding,
For thousands throws a main at *Covent Garden*.
These are the portraits we're oblig'd to shew ;
You are all judges if they're like or no :
Here should we fail, some other shape we'll try,
And grace our future scenes, with novelty.
I have a plan to treat you with *burletta*,
That cannot miss your taste, *Mia Spilletta*.
But should the following piece your mirth excite,
From Nature's Volume, we'll persist to write.
Your partial favour, bad us first proceed ;
Then spare th' offender, since you urg'd the deed.

14 N063

JENNY
Miss PE
Miss Suk

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

HARTOP	—	—	—	Mr. Foote,
SIR GREGORY GAZETTE				Mr. Yates,
JENKINS	—	—	—	Mr. Blakes.
TIM	—	—	—	Mr. Castallo.
ROBIN	—	—	—	Mr. Clough.

W O M E N.

JENNY	—	—	—	Miss Minors.
Miss PENELOPE TRIFLE			—	Mrs. Cross.
Miss Suky Trifle		—	—	Miss Mills.

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14 N033

THE
KNIGHTS.

ACT I.

SCENE, a Room.

Hartop and Jenkins *discover'd*.

Jenkins.

I Should not choose to marry into such a family.

Har. Choice, Dear Dick, is very little concern'd in the matter : And to convince you that love is not the minister of my counsels, know, that I never saw but once the object of my present purpose ; and that too at a time, and in a circumstance, not very likely to stamp a favourable impression. What think you of a raw boarding-school girl at Lincoln Minster, with a mind unpolish'd, a figure uninform'd, and a set of features tainted with the colours of her unwholesome food ?

Jenk. No very engaging object indeed, *Hartop*.

Har. Your thoughts now, were mine then : But some connections I have since had with her father, have given birth to my present design upon her : You are no stranger to the situation of my circumstances : My neighbourhood to Sir Penurious Trifle, was a sufficient motive for his advancing what money I wanted by way of mortgage : The hard terms he impos'd upon me, and the little regard I have paid to œconomy, has made it necessary for me to attempt by some scheme the re-establishment of my fortune. This young lady's simplicity,
not

not to call it ignorance, presented her at once as a proper subject for my purpose.

Jenk. Success to you, Jack, with all my soul! A fellow of your spirit and vivacity, mankind ought to support for the sake of themselves. For whatever Seneca and the other moral writers may have suggested in contempt of riches, it is plain their maxims were not calculated for the world as it now stands: In days of Yore, indeed, when Virtue was called Wisdom, and Vice, Folly, such principles might have been encouraged; but as the the present subjects of our enquiry are, not what a man is, but what he has; as to be rich, is to be wise and virtuous, and to be poor, ignorant and vicious, I heartily applaud your plan!

Har. Your observation is but too just. And is it not, Dick, a little unaccountable that we who condescend so servilely to copy the follies and fopperies of our polite neighbours, should be so totally averse to an imitation of their virtues? In France, has he wealth? is an interrogation never put 'till they are disappointed in their inquiries after the birth and wisdom of a fashionable fellow: But here, How much a year—Two thousand—The devil! In what county? Berkshire. Indeed?—God bless us! A happy dog! How the duce came I to be interested in a man's fortune, unless I am his steward or his taylor: Indeed knowledge and genius are worth examining into; by those my understanding may be improv'd, or my imagination gratify'd; but why such a man's being able to eat Ortolans, and drink French wine, is to recommend him to my esteem, is what I can't readily conceive.

Jenk. This complaint may with Justice be made of all imitations: The ridiculous side is ever the object imitated. But a truce to moralizing, and to our business. Prithee, in the first place, how can you gain admittance to your mistress? and in the second, is the girl independent of her father? his consent, I suppose, you have no thought of obtaining.

Har. Some farther proposals concerning my estate; such as an increase of the Mortgage, or an absolute sale, is a sufficient pretence for a visit: and as to the cash,

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twenty to my knowledge ; independent too, you rogue ! And besides, an only child, you know : And then, when things are done, they can't be undone—And 'tis well 'tis no worse.—and a hundred such pretty proverbs, will, it's great odds, reconcile the old fellow at last. Besides, my papa *in posse*, has a foible, which, if I condescend to humour, I have his soul, my dear.

Jenk. Prithee, now you are in spirits, give me a portrait of Sir Penurious ; tho' he is my neighbour, yet is he so domestic an animal, that I know no more of him than the common country conversation ; that he is a thrifty, wary man.

Har. The very abstract of penury ! Sir John Cutler, with his transmigrated stockings, was but a type of him. For instance, the Barber has the growth of his and his daughter's head once a year, for shaving the knight once a fortnight ; his shoes are made with the leather of a coach of his grandfather's, built in the year, one ; his male servant is footman, groom, carter, coachman, and taylor ; his maid employs her leisure hours in plain-work for the neighbours, which, Sir Penurious takes care, as her labour is for his emolument, shall be as many as possible, by joining with his daughter in scouring the rooms, making the beds, &c. thus much for his moral character. Then as to his intellectual, he is a mere *charte Blanche* ; the last man he is with must afford him matter for the next he goes to ; but a story is his idol, throw him in that, and he swallows it ; no matter what, raw or roasted, savoury or insipid, down it goes, and up again to the first person he meets ; It is upon this basis I found my favour with the Knight, having acquir'd patience enough to hear his stories, and equip'd myself with a quantity sufficient to furnish him ; his manner is indeed peculiar, and for once or twice entertaining enough. I'll give you a specimen—Is not that an equipage ?

Jenk. Hey ! Yes, faith, and the owner, an acquaintance of mine : sir Gregory Gazette, by Jupiter ! and his son Tim with him. Now I can match your knight. He must come this way to the parlour. We'll have a scene ; but take your cue ; he is a country politician.

O

Sir

Sir Gregory entering, and Waiter.

Sir Greg. What, neither the Gloucester Journal, nor the Worcester Courant, nor the Northampton Mercury, nor the Chester?—Mr. Jenkins, I am your humble servant: A strange town this, Mr. Jenkins, no news stirring, no papers taken in! Is that gentleman a stranger, Mr. Jenkins? Pray Sir, not to be too bold, you don't come from London?

Har. But last night.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! That's wonderful! Mr. Jenkins, introduce me.

Jenk. Mr. Hartop, Sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Greg. Sir I am proud to—Well, Sir, and what news? You come from—pray, Sir, are you a parliament man?

Har. Not I, indeed, sir.

Sir Greg. Good lack! may be belong to the law.

Har. Nor that.

Sir Greg. Oh, then in some of the offices; the Treasury or the Exchequer.

Har. Neither, sir.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! That's wonderful! Well, but Mr.—Pray what name did Mr. Jenkins, ah! ah.

Har. Hartop.

Sir Greg. Ay, true! What, not of the Hartops of Boston.

Har. No.

Sir Greg. May be not. There is, Mr. Hartop, one thing that I envy you Londoners in much:—Quires of News-papers! Now, I reckon, you read a matter of eight Sheets every day.

Har. Not one.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! Then, may be, you are about court; and so being at the fountain head, know what is in the papers before they are printed.

Har. I never trouble my head about them. An old fool!

Sir Greg. Good lord! your friend, Mr. Jenkins, is very close.

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Jenk. Why, Sir Gregory, Mr. Hartop is much in the secrets above ; and it becomes a man so trusted to be wary, you know.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so. Wonderful ! Ay, ay, a great man, no doubt.

Jenk. But I'll give him a better insight into your character, and that will induce him to throw off his reserve.

Sir Greg. May be so ; do, do ; ay, ay !

Jenk. Prithee, Jack, don't be so crusty : indulge the knight's humour a little ; besides, if I guess right, it may be necessary for the conduct of your design to contract a pretty strict intimacy there.

Har. Well, do as you will.

Jenk. Sir Gregory, Mr. Hartop's ignorance of your character made him a little shy in his replies ; but you will now find him more communicative ; and, in your ear,—he is a treasure ; he is in all the mysteries of government, at the bottom of every thing.

Sir Greg. Wonderful ! a treasure ! ay, may be so.

Jenk. And that you may have him to yourself I'll go in search of your son.

Sir Greg. Do so, do so ; Tim is without ; just come from his uncle Tregegle's at Menegizy in Cornwall :—Tim is an honest lad ! Do so, do so, [*Exit Jenk.*] Well, Mr. Hartop, and so we have a peace lack-a-day ! Long look'd for come at last. But, pray, Mr. Hartop, how many news-papers may you have printed in a week ?

Har. About a hundred and fifty, Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ! And all full, I reckon ; full as an egg ; nothing but news ! Well, well. I shall go to London one of these days. A hundred and fifty ! Wonderful ! And, pray now, which do you reckon the best ?

Har. Oh, Sir Gregory, they are as various in their excellencies as their uses ; if you are inclin'd to blacken by a couple of lines the reputation of a neighbour, whose character neither your nor his whole life can possibly restore ; you may do it for two shillings in one paper.—If you are displaced, or disappointed of a place, a trip-let against the ministry will be always well receiv'd at the head of another : And then as a paper of morning amusement, you have the Fool.

Sir Greg. The Fool! Good lack! And pray who and what may that same Fool be?

Har. Why, Sir Gregory, the author has artfully assumed that habit, like the royal jesters of old, to level his satyr with more security to himself, and severity to others.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so! The Fool! Ha, ha, ha! Well enough! A queer dog, and no fool, I warrant you. Killigrew, ah, I have heard my grandfather talk much of that same Killigrew, and no fool. But what's all this to news, Mr. Hartop? Who gives us the best account of the king of Spain, and the queen of Hungary, and those great folks? Come now, you could give us a little news if you would; come now!—Snug!—Nobody by. Good now do; come, ever so little.

Har. Why as you so largely contribute to the support of the government, it is but fair you should know what they are about. We are at present in a treaty with the pope.

Sir Greg. With the pope! Wonderful! Good now, good now! How, how?

Har. We are to yield him up a large tract of the Terra-Incognita, together with both the Needles, Scilly-Rocks, and the Lizard-Point, on condition that the Pretender has the government of Laputa, and the bishop of Greenland succeeds to St. Peter's chair; he being, you know, a Protestant, when possessed of the pontificals, issues out a bull, commanding all catholicks to be of his religion, they deeming the pope infallible; follow his directions; and then, sir *Gregory*, we are all of one mind.

Sir Greg. Good lack, good lack! rare news, rare news, rare news! ten millions of thanks, Mr. Hartop. But might not I just hint this to Mr. Soakum our vicar? 'twould rejoice his heart.

Har. Oh fie! by no means.

Sir Greg. Only a line——A little hint——do now.

Har. Well, sir, it is difficult for me to refuse you any thing.

Sir Greg. Ten thousand thanks! now! the pope——wonderful! I'll minute it down——both the needles?

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Har. Ay, both.

Sir Greg. Good now, I'll minute it—The Lizard-Point—Both the Needles—Scilly Rocks—Bishop of Greenland—St. Peter's chair—Why then when this is finished we may chance to attack the great Turk, and have holy wars again, Mr. Hartop.

Har. That's part of the scheme.

Sir Greg. Ah! good now! you see I have a head! politicks have been my study many a day. Ah, if I had been in London to improve by the news papers! they tell me doctor Drybones is to succeed to the bishoprick of Wisper.

Har. No; doctor——

Sir Greg. Indeed! I was told by my landlord at Rofs, that it was between him and the dean of——

Har. To my knowledge.

Sir Greg. Nay, you know best, to be sure: If it should——hush! here's Mr. Jenkins, and son Tim; mum! Mr. Jenkins does not know any thing about the treaty with the pope?

Har. Not a word.

Sir Greg. Mum!

Enter Tim and Mr. Jenkins.

Jenk. Master Timothy is almost grown out of knowledge, sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! ay, ay, ill weeds grows a-pace: son Tim, Mr. Hartop; a great man, child! Mr. Hartop, son Tim.

Har. Sir, I shall be always glad to know every branch that springs from so valuable a trunk as sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Greg. May be so. Wonderful! Ay, ay!

Har. Sir I am glad to see you in Herefordshire! Have you been long from Cornwall?

Tim. Ay, sir; a matter of four weeks or a month, more or less.

Sir Greg. Well said Tim! Ay, ay, ask Tim any questions, he can answer for himself. Tim, tell Mr. Hartop all the news about the elections, and the tinnors and the

tides, and the roads and the pilchards. I want a few words with my master Jenkins.

Har. You have been so long absent from your native country, that you have almost forgot it.

Tim. Yes sure: I ha' been at uncle Tregegles a matter of twelve or a dozen year, more or less.

Har. Then I reckon you were quite impatient to see your papa and mama.

Tim. No sure, not I. Father sent for me to uncle; sure Menegizy is a choice place! and I could a'stay'd there all my born days, more or less.

Har. Pray, sir, what were your amusements?

Tim. Nan! What d'ye say?

Har. How did you divert yourself?

Tim. Oh, we ha' pastimes enow there: We ha' bull-beating, and cock-fighting, and fishing, and hunting, and hurling, and wrestling.

Har. The two last are sports for which that country is very remarkable: In those, I presume, you are very expert.

Tim. Nan! what?

Har. I say you are a good wrestler.

Tim. Oh! yes sure, I can wrestle well enow: But we don't wrestle after your fashion: We ha' no tripping, fath and soul! We go all upon close hugs, or the flying mare. Will you try a fall, master? I wan't hurt you, fath and soul.

Har. We had as good not venture tho'. But have you left in Cornwall nothing that you regret the loss of more than hurling and wrestling.

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. No favourite she?

Tim. Arra, I coupled favourite and jowler together, and sure they tug'd it all the way up. Part with favourite! No I thank you for nothing! You must know I nurs'd Favourite myself! uncle's huntsman was going to mill-pond to drown all musick's puppies; so I sav'd she: But, fath, I'll tell you a comical story; at Lanston, they both broke loose, and eat a whole lion-a'-veal, and a leg of beef: Criss! how landlord swear'd! Fath, the

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the poor fellow was almost maz'd : It made me die wi' laughing : But how came you to know about our Favourite ?

Har. A circumstance so material to his son, could not escape the knowledge of sir Gregory Gazette's friends. But here you mistook me a little 'squire Tim, I meant whether your affections were not settled upon some pretty girl : Has not some Cornish lass caught your heart ?

Tim. Hush ! 'God, the old man will hear ; jog a tiny-bit this way—Won't a'tell father ?

Har. Upon my honour !

Tim. Why then I'll tell you the whole story more or less. Do you know Mally Pengrouse ?

Har. I am not so happy.

Tim. She's uncle's milkmaid ; she's as handsome, lord ; her face all red and white, like the inside of a shoulder of mutton ; so I made love to our Mally : And just, fath, as I had got her good will to run away to Exeter and be married, uncle found it out, and sent word to father ; and father sent for me home ; but I don't love her a bit the worser for that : But, 'icod, if you tell father, he'll knock my brains out ; for he says I'll disparage the family ; and mother's as mad as a March hare about it : So father and mother ha' brought me to be married to some young body in these parts.

Har. What, is my lady here ?

Tim. No sure, dame Winifred, as father calls her, could not come along.

Har. I am sorry for that ; I have the honour to be a distant relation of her ladyship's.

Tim. Like enough, fath ! she's a-kin to half the world, I think. But don't you say a word to father about Mally Pengrouse. Hush !

Jenk. Mr. Hartop, sir Gregory will be amongst us some time ; he is going with his son to sir Penurious Trifle's : There is a kind of a treaty of marriage on foot between Miss Sukey Trifle and Mr. Timothy.

Har. The devil! I shall be glad of every circumstance that can make me better acquainted with sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now; may be so, may be so!

Tim. Father, sure the gentleman says as how mother and he are a-kin.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! Lack-a day! Lack-a-day! How, how? I am proud to——But how, Mr. Har-top, how?

Har. Why, sir, a cousin-german of my aunt's first husband, inter-marry'd with a distant relation of a collateral branch by the mother's side the Apprices of Lanttrindon; and we have ever since quarter'd in a 'scutcheon of pretence the three Goat's tails rampant, divided by a cheveron, field argent; with a leek pendant in the dexter point, to distinguish the second house.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! wonderful! nearly, nearly related! Good now, good now, if dame Winifred was here, she'd make 'em all out with a wet finger; but they are above me. Prithee, Tim, good now, see after the horses—And d'ye hear? try if you can get any news-papers.

Tim. Yes, father——But, cousin *What d'ye call-um,* not a word about Mally Pengrouse.

Har. Mum!

[*Exit Tim.*]

Sir Greg. Good now, that boy will make some mistake about the horses now! I'll go myself. Good now, no farther, cousin; if you please, no ceremony——A hundred and fifty a week! The fool! ha, ha, ha! wonderful! an odd dog.

[*Exit sir Greg.*]

Jenk. So, Jack, here's a fresh spoke in your wheel.

Har. This is a cursed cross incident.

Jenk. Well, but something must be done to frustrate the scheme of your new cousin's. Can you think of nothing?

Har. I have been hammering: Pray are the two Knights intimate? Are they well acquainted with each other's person?

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Jenk. Faith, I can't tell. But we may soon know.

Har. Cou'd you recommend me a good-spirited girl, who has humour and compliance to follow a few directions; and understanding enough to barter a little inclination for 3,000 l. a year, and a Fool?

Jenk. In part I guess your design: The man's daughter of the house is a good lively lass, has a fortune to make, and no reputation to lose. I'll call her—Jenny! But the enemy's at hand—I'll withdraw and prepare Jenny. When the worshipful family are retir'd, I'll introduce the wench. [Exit Jenk.]

Enter Sir Gregory and Tim.

Sir Greg. Pray now, Cousin, are you in friendship with Sir Penurious Trifle?

Har. I have the honour, Sir, of that gentleman's acquaintance.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so! But, lack-a-day, cousin, is he such a miser as folks say? Good now, they tell me we shall hardly have necessaries for ourselves and horses at Gripe-hall. But as you are a relation, you should, good now, know the affairs of the family.—Here's Sir Penurious's letter; here, cousin.

Har. *Your overture I receive with pleasure, and should be glad to meet you in Shropshire.* I fancy, from a thorough knowledge of Sir Penurious's disposition, and by what I can collect from the contents of that letter, he would be much better pleas'd to meet you here, than at his own house.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, may be so! A strange man wonderful! but, good now, cousin, what must we do?

Har. I this morning pay'd sir Penurious a visit; and if you'll honour me with your commands, I'll—

Sir Greg. Wonderful, to-day! good now, that's lucky! cousin, you are very kind: good now, I send a letter, Tim, by cousin Hartop.

Har. A letter from so old an acquaintance, and upon so happy an occasion, will secure me a favourable reception.

Sir Greg. Good lack, good lack, an old acquaintance, indeed, cousin Hartop ! We were at Hereford 'sife together—Let's see, wonderful, how long ago ? 'twas while I was courting dame Winny ; the year before I married her—Good now, how long ? Let's see—That year the hackney stable was built, and Peter Ugly the blind pad fell into a sawpit.

Tim. Mother says father and she was marry'd the first of April in the year ten ; and I knows 'tis there about, for I am two and thirty ; and brother Jeremy, and Roger, and Gregory, and sister Nelly, were born'd before I.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ! How time wears away ! wonderful ! thirty-eight years ago, Tim ; I could not have thought it. But come in, let's set about the letter. But pray, cousin, what diversions, good now, are going forward in London ?

Har. Oh, sir, we are in no distrefs for amusements ; we have plays, balls, puppet-shows, masquerades, bull-baitings, boxings, burlettas, routs, drums, and a thousand others ; but I am in haste for your epistle, Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Cousin, your servant.

[Exit Sir Greg. and Tim.]

Har. I am your most obedient.—Thus far our scheme succeeds : And if Jenkins's girl can assume the awkward pertness of the daughter, with as much success as I can imitate the spirited folly of Sir Penurious the father, I don't despair of a happy catastrophe.

Enter Jenny.

Jenny. Sir, Mr. Jenkins—

Har. Oh, child, your instructions shall be administer'd within.

Jen. Mr. Jenkins has open'd your design, and I am ready and able to execute my part.

Har. My dear, I have not the least doubt of either your inclination or ability.—But, pox take this old fellow ! what in the devil's name can bring him back ?—Scour, Jenny.

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Enter Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Cousin, I beg pardon, but I have favour to beg—Good now, could not you make interest at some Coffee-house in London to buy, for a small matter, the old books of news-papers, and send them into the country to me? They would pass away the time rarely in a rainy day.

Har. Sir, I'll send you a cart-load.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now: Ten thousand thanks! you are a cousin indeed! But pray, cousin, let us, good now, see some of the works of that same Fool.

Har. I'll send them you all; but a——

Sir Greg. What, all? Lack-a-day, that's kind, cousin! The *Terra Incognita*——Both the *Needles*——a great deal of that! But what bishop is to be pope?

Har. Zounds, Sir! I am in haste for your letter——
When I return, ask as many questions——

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, that's true—I'll in, and about it——But, cousin, the Pope is not to have Gibraltar?

Har. No, no; damn it, no! As none but the Fool could say it, so none but ideots would believe him.—
Pray, sir Gregory——

Sir Greg. Well, well, cousin! Lack-a-day, you are so——But, pray——

Har. Damn your praying; if you don't finish your letter immediately, you may carry it yourself.

Sir Greg. Well, well, cousin! Lack-a-day, you are in such a——Good now! I go, I go.

Har. But if the truth should be discover'd, I shall be inevitably disappointed.

Sir Greg. But, cousin, are Scilly Rocks——

Har. I wish they were in your guts, with all my heart! I must quit the field, I find. [Exit.]

Sir Greg. Wonderful! Good now, good now, a passionate man! Lack-a-day, I am glad the Pope is not to have Gibraltar tho'!

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Sir Gregory, and Tim reading News to him, discovered.

Tim. CONstantinople, N. S. Nov. 15, The Grande Seignieur—

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! Good now, Tim, the politics, child: And read the stars, and the dashes, and the blanks, as I taught you, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father—We can assure our readers that the D—Dash is to go to F blank; and that a certain noble L— is to resign his P—e in the T—y, in order to make r—n for the two three stars.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! Good now! good now!—Great news, Tim! Ay, I knew the two three stars would come in play one time or other. This London Evening knows more than any of them. Well, child, well.

Tim. From the D. J.

Sir Greg. Ay, that's the Dublin Journal. Go on, Tim.

Tim. Last Saturday a gang of highwaymen broke into an empty house on Ormond-Quay, and strip'd it of all the furniture.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day; wonderful! to what a height these rogues are grown.

Tim. The way to Mr. Keith's chapel is turn of your—

Sir Greg. Pshaw! skip that, Tim; I know that road as well as the Doctor! 'Tis in every time.

Tim. I. Ward, at the Cat and Gridiron, Petticoat-lane, makes tabby all over for people inclined to be crooked: And if he was to have the universal world for making a pair of stays he could not put better stuff in them—

Sir Greg. Good now; where's that, Tim?

Tim. At the Cat and Gridiron, father.

Sir Greg. I'll minute that: All my lady Isard's children, good now, are inclined to be crooked.

Enter a Drawer.

Dra. Sir, Mr. Jenkins beg's to speak with you.

Sir Greg. Good now; desire him to walk in.

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Enter Jenkins.

Jenk. I thought it might not be improper to prepare you for a visit from Sir Penurious Trifle ! I saw him and his daughter alight at the apothecary's above.

Sir Greg. What, they are come, wonderful ! very kind, very kind, very kind, indeed, Mr.—Come, Tim, settle my cravat : good now, let's be a little decent : remember your best bow to your mistress, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father ; but must not I kiss Miss Suck ?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, ay, ay ! pray, is cousin Hartop, come along ?

Jenk. I have not seen him : but, I fancy, I had better introduce my neighbours.

Sir Greg. Good now, would you be so kind ! [*Exit Jenkins.*] Stand behind me, Tim,—Pull down your ruffles, child.

Tim. But, father, won't Miss Suck think me bold if I kiss her chops the first time ?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day ! No, Tim, no : Faint heart never won fair lady. Ha ! Tim, had you but seen me attack dame Winny ! But times ar'n't as they were !—Good now, we were another kind of folks in those days ; stout, hearty smacks, that would ha' made your mouth water again ; and the mark stood upon the pouting lip like the print upon a pound of butter. But the master-misses of the present age go, lack-a-day, as gingerly about it, as if they were afraid to fill their mouths with the paint upon their mistresses cheeks. Ah, the days I have seen.

Tim. Nay, father, I warrant, if that's all, I kiss her hearty enow, faith and sole !

Sir Greg. Hush, Tim, hush ! stand behind me, child.

Enter Hartop as Sir Penurious Trifle, and Jenny as Miss Sukey, and Jenkins.

Sir Greg. Sir Penurious, I am overjoy'd !—good now.

Sir Pen. Sir Gregory, I kiss your hand ! My daughter Suck.

Sir Greg. Wonderful ! Miss I am proud to—Son
Tim,

Tim—Sir Penurious——best bow, child—Miss Suck—

Tim. An't that right, father? [*Kisses her.*]

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! I am glad to see you look so well! You keep your own, Sir Penurious.

Sir Pen. Ay, ay, stout enough, Sir Gregory, stout enough, brother knight; hearty as an oak; hey, Dick? Gad now I talk of an oak, I'll tell you a story of an oak; it will make you die with laughing; hey, you Dick, you have heard it: Shall I tell it, Sir Gregory?

Jenk Tho' I have heard it so often, yet there is something so engaging in your manner of telling a story,—that it always appears new.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, I love a comical story. Pray, Sir Penurious, let's have it;—Mind, Tim, mind, child.

Tim. Yes, father; fath and sole, I love a choice story to my heart's blood!

Sir Pen. You, knight, I was at Bath last Summer—A water that people drink when they are ill. You have heard of the Bath, Dick? Hey, you!

Tim. Yes, Fath, I know Bath; I was there in way up.

Sir Greg. Hush, Tim; good now, hush!

Sir Pen. There's a Coffee-house, you, a place where people drink coffee and tea, and read the news.

Sir Greg. Pray, Sir Penurious, how many papers may they take in?

Sir Pen. Pshaw! Damn the news! Mind the story.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! A hasty man, Tim!

Sir Pen. Pox take you both! I have lost the story—Where did I leave off, hey, you Dick?

Tim. About coffee and tea.

Sir Pen. Right, you, right! True, true! So, God, you Knight, I us'd to breakfast at this Coffee-house ever morning, it cost me eight pence tho', and I had always a breakfast at home—No matter for that tho'! There I breakfasted; you Dick, God, at the same table with lord Tom Truewit—You have heard of Truewit, you, Knight; a droll dog! You Dick, he told us the story and made us die with laughing: You have

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have heard of Charles the second, you Knight, he was son of Charles the first ; king here in England, that was beheaded by Oliver Cromwell, so what does Charles the second, you Knight, do ; but he fights Noll at Worcester, a town you have heard of, not far off ; but all would not do, you ; God, Noll made him scamper, made him run ; take to his heels, you Knight ; Truewit told us the Story, made us die with laughing ; I always breakfasted at the Coffee-house, it cost me 8d. tho' I had a breakfast at home—So, what does Charles do, but he hid himself in an oak, an oak tree, you, in a wood call'd Boscobel, from t o Italian words, Bosco Bello, a fine wood, you ; and off he marches : But Old Noll would not let him come home ; no, says he, you don't come here—Lord Tom told us the story ; made us die with laughing ; it cost me 8d. tho' I had a breakfast at home : So, you Knight, when Noll dy'd ; Monk there, you Afterwards Albemarle, in the north brought him back : So, you, the Cavaliers, you have heard of them ? They were friends to the Stuarts, what did they do, God, you Dick, but they put up Charles in a sign, the Royal Oak, you have seen such signs at country alehouses : So, God, you, what does a Puritan do, the Puritans were friends to Noll, but he puts up the sign of an Owl in an Ivy Bush, and underneath he writes, *This is not the Royal Oak* : You have seen writings under signs, you Knight : Upon this, says the Royalists, God this must not be ; so, you, what do they do, but, God, they prosecuted the poor Puritan ; but they made him change his sign tho' : And, you Dick, how d'ye think they chang'd ? God, he puts up the Royal Oak ; and underneath he writes, *This is not the Owl in the Ivy Bush*. It made us all die with laughing ; Lord Tom told the story ; I always breakfasted at the Coffee-house, tho' it cost me 8d. and I had a breakfast at home, hey, you, Knight ; what, Dick, hey !

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ; wonderful !

Tim. A choice tale, fath !

Jenk. Oh, Sir Penurious is a most entertaining companion that must be allow'd.

Sir

Sir Greg. Good now, ay, ay, a merry man ! But, lack-a-day, would not the young lady chuse a little refreshment after her ride ? Some tea, or some——

Sir Pen. Hey, you Knight ! No, no ; we intend to dine with thee, man. Well, you, Tim, what dost think of thy father-in-law that is to be, hey ? A jolly cock, you Tim, hey Dick. But prithee, boy, what dost do with all this tawdry tinsel on ? That hat and waistcoat ? Trash, Knight, trash ! More in thy pocket and less in thy cloaths ; hey, you Dick ? God, you Knight, I'll make you laugh : I went to London, you Dick, last year to call in a mortgage ; and what does me I, Dick, but take a trip to a Coffee-house in St. Martin's-lane, in comes a French fellow forty times as fine as Tim, with his muff and *parlevous*, and his *francés* ; and his head, you Knight, as white with powder, God, you, as a twelfth cake : And who the devil d'ye think, Dick, this might be, hey, you Knight ?

Sir Greg. Good now, an Ambassador to be sure.

Sir Pen. God, you Knight, not better nor worse then Mynheer Vancaper, a Dutch figure-dancer at the Opera-House in the Haymarket.

Sir Greg. Wonderful ! Good now, good now !

Sir Pen. Pshaw ! Pox, prithee, Tim, nobody dresses now ; all plain ; look at me, Knight, I am in the tip of the mode ; now am I in full dress, hey, Dick ?

Jenk. You, Sir, don't want the aids of dress. But in Mr. Gazette, a little regard to that particular is but a necessary compliment to his mistress.

Sir Pen. Stuff, Dick, stuff ! My daughter, Knight, has had other guests breeding ; hey you ! Suck, come forward. Plain as a pike-staff, Knight, all as nature made her ; hey, Tim, no flams : Prithee, Tim, off with thy lace and burn it ; 'twill help to buy the licence : She'll not like thee a bit the better for that ; hey, Suck ! But, you Knight ; God, Dick, a toast and tankard would not be amiss after our walk ; hey, you ?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ! What you will, Sir Penurious.

Sir Pen. God, that's hearty you ! But we won't part the young couple, hey : I'll send Suck some bread and cheese

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cheese in ; hey, Knight ! At her, Tim. Come, Dick ; come, you, Knight. Did I ever tell you my courtship, hey, Dick ? 'twill make you laugh.

Jenk. Not as I remember.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, let's have it.

Sir Pen. You know my wife was blind, you, Knight.

Sir Greg. Good now ; wonderful ! Not I.

Sir Pen. Blind as a beetle when I marry'd her, Knight : Hey, Dick ! She was drown'd in our orchard . Maid Bess, Knight, went to market, you, Dick ; and wife rambled into the orchard, and soufe, drop'd into the fish-pond : We found her out next day, but she was dead as a herring : No help for that, Dick ; buried her tho', hey, you ! She was only daughter to Sir Tristram Muckworm, you ; rich enough, you, hey ! God, you, what does she do, you, but she falls in love with young Sleek her father's chaplain, hey, you ! Upon that, what does me I, but slips on Domine's robes, you, pass'd myself upon her for him, and we were tack'd together, you, Knight, hey ! God, tho' I believe she never lik'd me ; but what signifies that, hey, Dick ! She was rich, you. But come, let's leave the children together.

Sir Greg. Sir, I wait on you.

Sir Pen. Nay, pray—

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, 'tis impossible——

Sir Pen. Pox of ceremony ! You, Dick, hey ? God, Knight, I'll tell you a story : One of our ambassadors in France, you, a devilish polite fellow reckon'd, Dick : God, you, what does the King of France do, but, says he, I'll try the manners of this fine gentleman : So, Knight, going into a coach together, the King would have my lord go first : Oh, an't please your Majesty, I can't indeed ; you, hey, Dick ! Upon which, what does me the King, but he takes his arm thus, you, Dick, am I king of France, or you ? Is it my coach or yours ? and so pushes him in thus. Hey, Dick !

Sir Greg. Good now, good now ! He, he, he !

Sir Pen. God, Dick, I believe I have made a mistake here ; I should have gone in first ; hey, Dick ! Knight, God, you, beg pardon. Yes, your coach, not mine ;
your

your house, not mine; hey, knight!

Sir Greg. Wonderful; a merry man, Mr. Jenkins.

[Exit the two Knights and Jenk.]

Tim. Father and cousin are gone, fath and sole!

Jenny. I fancy my lover is a little puzzled how to begin.

Tim. How——fath and sole, I don't know what to say: How d'ye do, Miss Suck?

Jenny. Pretty well, thank you,

Tim. You have had a choice walk.——'Tis a rare day, fath and sole.

Jenny. Yes, the day's well enough.

Tim. Is your house a good way off here?

Jenny. Three or four mile.

Tim. That's a good long walk, fath.

Jenny. I make nothing of it, and back again.

Tim. Like enow. [Whistles.]

Jenny. [Sings.]

Tim. You have a rare pipe of your own, miss.

Jenny. I can sing loud enough, if I have a mind: But father don't love singing.

Tim. Like enow. [Whistles.]

Jenny. And I an't over fond of whistling.

Tim. Hey! ay, like enow: And I am a bitter bad singer.

Jenny. Hey! ay, like enough.

Tim. Pray Miss Suck, did ever any body make love to you before?

Jenny. Before! When?

Tim. Before now.

Jenny. What if I won't tell you?

Tim. Why then you must let it alone, fath and sole.

Jenny. Like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did your father tell you any thing?

Jenny. About what?

Tim. About I.

Jenny. What should a tell?

Tim. Tell! Why, as how I and father was come a woing.

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Jenny. Who?

Tim. Why, you. Could you like me for a sweetheart, Miss Suck?

Jenny. I don't know.

Tim. Mayhap somebody may ha' got your good will already.

Jenny. And what then?

Tim. Then! hey, I don't know. But if you could fancy me——

Jenny. For what?

Tim. For your true-lover.

Jenny. Well, what then?

Tim. Then: hey! why, fath, we may chance to be marry'd, if the old folks agree together.

Jenny. And suppose I won't be marry'd to you?

Tim. Nay, Miss Suck, I can't help it, fath and sole. But father and mother bid me come a courting: And if you won't ha' me, I'll tell father so.

Jenny. You are in a woundy hurry, methinks.

Tim. Not I, fath! You may stay as long as——

Enter Waiter.

Wait. There's a woman without wants to speak with Mr. Timothy Gazette.

Tim. That's I. I am glad on't. Well, Miss Suck, your servant. You'll think about it, and let's know your mind when I come back.—God, I don't care whether she likes me or no; I don't like her half so well as Mally Pengrouse.—Well, your servant, Miss Suck. *[Exit Tim.]*

Jenny. Was there ever such an unlick'd cub? I don't think his fortune a sufficient reward for sacrificing my person to such a booby: But as he has money enough, it shall go hard but I please myself: I fear I was a little too backward with my gentleman: But however, a favourable answer to his last question will soon settle matters.

Enter

Enter Jenkins.

Jenk. Now, Jenny, what news, child? Are things fix'd? Are you ready for the nuptial knot?

Jenny. We are in a fair way: I thought to have quicken'd my swain's advances by a little affected coyness; but the trap would not take: I expect him back in a minute, and then leave it to my management.

Jenk. Where is he gone?

Jenny. The drawer called him to some woman.

Jenk. Woman! he neither knows or is known by any body here. What can this mean? No counter-plot! But, pox, that's impossible! You have not blab'd Jenny?

Jenny. My interest would prevent me.

Jenk. Upon that security any woman may, I think, be trusted. I must after him tho'. [Exit.

Jenny. I knew the time when Jenkins would not have left me so hastily: 'tis odd that the same cause that increases the passion in one sex, should destroy it in the other: The reason is above my reach; but the fact I am a severe witness of. Heigh ho!

Enter Hartop, sir Penurious, and sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Pen. And so, you Knight, says he, you know Knight, what low dogs the ministers were then, how does your pot—a pot, you, that they put over the fire to boil broth and meat in.—You have seen a pot, you Knight—how does your pot boil these troublesome times? hey you! God, my lord, says he, I don't know, I seldom go into my kitchen; a kitchen, you Knight is a place where they dress victuals; roast and boil, and so forth; God, says he, I seldom go into my kitchen—but, I suppose, the scum is uppermost still; hey, you Knight! what, God, hey; but where's your son?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, where's Tim, Miss Sukey? lack-a-day, what's become of Tim?

Jenny. Gone out a tiny bit; he'll be here presently.

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Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now! good now! well, and how Miss Sukey—has Tim? has he? well, and what, you have—Wonderful!

Enter a Servant with a Letter.

Serv. Sir, I was commanded to deliver this into your own hands by Mr. Jenkins.

Sir Pen. Hey, you, what, a letter? God so! Any answer, you? hey!

Serv. None, sir.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, sir Penurious is busy! Well, Miss, and did Tim do the thing? Did he please you? Come now, tell us the whole story: wonderful! rare news for dame Winny! ha, Tim's father's own son! But come, whisper—ay.

Sir Pen. I have only time to tell you that your scheme is blasted: This instant I encounter'd Mrs. Penelope Trifle, with her niece, they will soon be with you—So then all's over, but let's see what expedition will do—well, you Knight, hey! What have they settled? Is the girl willing?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, right as my leg! Ah, Tim, little did I think—but, lack-a-day, I wonder where the boy is? Let's seek him.

Sir Pen. Agreed, you Knight; hey, come.

Enter Jenkins.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, here's Mr. Jenkins. Good now, have you seen Tim?

Jenk. Your curiosity shall be immediately satisfied; but I must first have a word with sir Penurious.

Sir Pen. Well, you, what, hey; any news, Dick?

Jenk. Better than you could hope, your rival is dispos'd of.

Sir Pen. Dispos'd of! How?

Jenk. Marry'd by this time, you rogue; the woman that wanted him was no other than Mally Pengrouse; trudg'd it up all the way after him, as Tim says, I have

have recommended them to my chaplain; and before this, the business is done.

Har. Bravissimo! you rogue! But how shall I get off with the Knight?

Jenk. Nay that must be your contrivance.

Har. I have it—suppose I was to own the whole design to sir Gregory, as our plan has not succeeded with his son; and as he seems to have a tolerable regard for me, it is possible he may assist my scheme on sir Penurious.

Jenk. 'Tis worth trying however: But he comes.

Sir Greg. Well, good now, Mr. Jenkins, have you seen Tim? I can't think where the boy—

Har. 'Tis now time, sir Gregory to set you clear with respect to some particulars: I am now no longer sir Penurious Trifle, but your friend and relation, Jack Hartop.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, cousin Hartop, as I am a living man—hey—Well, but, good now, how, Mr. Jenkins, hey?

Jenk. The story, sir Gregory, is rather too long to tell you now, but in two words; my friend Hartop has very long had a passion for Miss Trifle; and was apprehensive your son's application would destroy his views; which, in order to defeat, he assumed the character of sir Penurious: But he is so captivated with your integrity and friendship, that he rather chuses to forego his own interest, than interrupt the happiness of your son.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, that's kind! who could have thought it, cousin Hartop? Lack-a-day, well, but where's Tim? hey! good now, and who are you?

Jenk. This, sir, is Jenny, the handmaid of the house.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! a pestilent hussy! Ah, Hartop, you are a wag; a pize of your pots and your royal oaks! Lack-a-day, who could ha thought—Ah, Jenny, you're a——But where's Tim?

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Enter sir Gregory's servant.

Serv. Wounds, master! never stir alive if master Tim has na gone and marry'd Mally Pengrouse.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! how, sirrah, how? good now, good now, cousin Hartop—Mally Pengrouse! who the dickens is she?

Serv. Master Timothy's sweetheart in Cornwall.

Sir Greg. And how came she here? lack-a-day, cousin;

Serv. She tramp'd it up after master: master Timothy is without, and says, as how they be marry'd: I wanted him to come in but he's afraid you'll knock'n down.

Sir Greg. Knock'n down! Good now, let me come at him! I'll—ah, rogue! lack-a-day, cousin, shew me where he is; I'll—

Har. Moderate your fury, good sir Gregory; consider, it is an evil without a remedy.

Sir Greg. But what will dame Winny say? Good now, such a disparagement to—And then, what will sir Penurious say? lack-a-day, I am almost distracted! And you, you lubberly dog; why did not you—I'll—Ah, cousin Hartop! cousin Hartop! good now, good now.

Har. Dear sir, be calm; this is no such surprising matter; we have such instances in the news papers every day.

Sir Greg. Good now, no, cousin, no.

Har. Indeed sir Gregory it was but last week that lord Lofty's son marry'd his mother's maid, and lady Betty Forward run away not a month ago with her uncle's butler.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! What in the news? good now, that's some comfort however, but what will sir Penurious—

Har. As to that, leave him to me, I have a project to prevent his laughing at you I'll warrant.

Sir Greg. But how, how, cousin Hartop, how?

Har. Sir Gregory, dy'e think me your friend?

Sir

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, ay, cousin, ay.

Har. And would you in return serve me in a circumstance that can't injure yourself?

Sir Greg. Good now, to be sure, cousin.

Har. Will you then permit me to assume the figure of your son, and so pay my addressee to Miss Trifle? I was pretty happy in the imitation of her father; and if I could impose upon your sagacity, I shall find less difficulty with your brother knight.

Sir Greg. Good now, Tim; ah, you could not touch him.

Har. I warrant you. But see, the young gentleman.

Enter Tim.

Sir Greg. Ah, Tim, Tim; little did I——Good now, good now.

Tim. I could not help it now, fath and sole: But if you'll forgive me this time, I'll never do so no more.

Sir Greg. Well, well, if thee can't forgive thyself, I can forgive thee; but thank thy cousin Hartop.

Har. Oh, sir! if you are satisfy'd, I am rewarded. I wish you joy, joy to you, child.

Sir Greg. Thanks, cousin Hartop.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Sir, Mrs. Penelope Trifle, with her niece, being come to town, and hearing your worship was in the house, would be glad to pay you their compliments.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! wonderful! Here we are all topsy-turvey again! What can be done now, cousin Hartop?

Har. Dick! shew the ladies in here, but delay them a little. The luckiest incident in the world, sir Gregory! If you will be kind enough to lend Jenkins your dress, and master Timothy will favour me with his, I'll make up matters in a moment.

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Sir Greg. Ay, ay, cousin!

Tim. Fath and sole, you shall have mine dire——

Har. No, no, step in the next room a minute, sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Ay, ay, where you will.

Tim. Fath, here will be choice sport.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Mrs. Penelope and Suck, with Waiter.

Wait. The gentlemen will wait on you presently. Would you chuse any refreshment?

Suck. A draught of ale, friend, for I'm main dry.

Pen. Fie! fie! niece! Is that liquor for a young lady? Don't disparage your family and breeding; the person is to be born that ever saw me touch any thing stronger than water 'till I was three-and twenty.

Suck. Troth! aunt, that's so long ago, that I think there's few people alive who can remember what you did then.

Pen. How! gillflirt! none of your fleers! I'm glad here's a husband coming that will take you down: your tantrums! You are grown too head-strong and robust for me.

Suck. Gad, I believe you would be glad to be taken down the same way!

Pen. Oh! you are a pert——But see your Lover approaches. Now Sukey, be careful, child: None of your——

Enter Jenkins as Sir Gregory, and Hartop as Tim.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady! I rejoice to see you! wonderful! And your niece! Tim, the ladies.

Har. Your servant, mistress! I am glad to see you, Miss Suck. [*Salutes her.*] Fath and sole mistress Suck's a fine young woman, more or less!

Suck. Yes, I am well enough, I believe.

Jenk. But, lady! where's my brother Trifle? where sir Penurious?

Suck. Father's at home in expectation of you, and aunt and I be come to town to make preparations.

Jenk. Ay! wonderful! Pray, lady; shall I, good now! crave a word in private? Tim, will you and your sweetheart draw back a little.

Har. Yes, father; come, Miss will you jog a tinny-bit this way?

Suck. With all my heart.

Jenk. There is, lady, a wonderful affair has happen'd, good now! Son Tim has fallen in love with a young woman at his uncle's, and 'tis partly to prevent bad consequences that I am, lack-a-day, so hasty to match him: and one of my men, good now, tells me that he has seen the wench since we have been in town; she has followed us here, sure as a gun, lady! If Tim sees the girl he'll never marry your niece.

Pen. It is indeed, Sir Gregory Gazette, a most critical conjuncture, and requires the most mature deliberation.

Jenk. —Deliberation! lack-a-day! lady, whilst we deliberate the boy will be lost.

Pen. Why, Sir Gregory Gazette, what operations can we determine upon.

Jenk. Lack-a-day! I know but one.

Pen. Administer your proposition, Sir Gregory Gazette, you will have my concurrence, sir, in any thing that does not derogate from the regulations of conduct; for it would be most preposterous in one of my character, to deviate from the strictest attention.

Jenk. Lack-a-day! lady. No such matter is wanted. But, good now! Could not we tack the young couple together directly? Your brother and I have already agreed.

Pen. Are the previous preliminaries settled, Sir Gregory Gazette?

Pen. Good now! As firm as a rock, lady!

Pen. Why, then to preserve your son, and accomplish the union between our families, I have no objections to the acceleration of their nuptials, provided the child is inclined, and a minister may be procur'd.

Pen. Wonderful! you are very good! good now! There has been one match already in the house to-day. We may have the same parson; here! Tim! and young gentlewo-

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gentlewoman!—Well, miss! wonderful and how?
Has, Tim? Hey, boy! is not miss a fine young lady?

Har. Fath and sole, father! miss is a charming young woman! all red and white, like Mally—Hum!

Jenk. Hush, Tim, well, and miss how does my boy: He's an honest hearty lad! has he? good now! had the art? How d'ye like him, young gentlewoman?

Suck. Liken? well enough, I think.

Jenk. Why, then, miss; with your leave your aunt and I here have agreed, if you are willing to have the wedding over directly.

Suck. Gad! with all my heart. Ask the young man.

Har. Fath and sole! just as you please, to-morrow, or when you will, more or less.

Jenk. Good now, good now! then get you in there, there you will find one to do your business wonderful! matters will soon be managed within. Well, lady, this was, good now, so kind! lack-a-day! I verily believe if Dame Winny was dead that I should be glad lead up such another dance with you, lady!

Pen. You are, sir, something too precipitate: Nor would there, did circumstances concur as you insinuate, be so absolute a certitude, that I who have rejected so many matches should instantaneously succumb.

Jenk. Lack-a-day! lady! Good now! I——

Pen. No, sir; I would have you instructed, that had not Penelope Trifle made irrefragable resolutions, she need not so long have preserved her family surname.

Jenk. Wonderful! why, I was only——

Pen. Nor has the title of Lady Gazette, such resplendant charms or such bewitching allurements, as to throw me at once into the arms of Sir Gregory——

Jenk. Good now, who says——

Pen. Could wealth, beauty, or titles superior to perhaps——

Enter Sir Gregory, Roger, and Tim.

Tim. Yes, indeed, father; Mr. Hartop knew on't as well as I; and Mr. Jenkins got us a parson.

Sir Greg. Good now! good now! a rare couple of friends! But I'll be even with them! I'll marr their market; master Jenkins, you have fobb'd me finely!

Jenk. Lack-a-day! What's the matter now?

Sir Greg. Come, come, none of your Lack-a-day! None of your gambols, nor your tricks to me; good now, good now! give me my cloaths; here take your tawdry trappings, I have found you out at last: I'll be no longer your property.

Jenk. Wonderful! What's all this? lady! good now, good now, What's here, a stage-play?

Sir Greg. Play me no plays! But give me my wig; and your precious friend my loving cousin, (poiz on the kindred) let'n.—

Jenk. Good now! good now! What are these folks? As sure as a gun they're mad.

Sir Greg. Mad! no, no; we are neither mad nor fools; no thanks to you tho'.

Pen. What'sis all this? Can you unravel this perplexity, untwine this mystery, sir Gregory Gazette?

Sir Greg. He, sir Gregory Gazette? Lack-a-day, lady! you are tricked, imposed on, bam-boozled; good now! good now! 'Tis I am sir Gregory Gazette.

Pen. How!

Tim. Fath and sole, 'tis true mistress; and I am his son Tim, and will swear it.

Pen. Why is n't Mr. Timothy Gazette with my niece Susannah Trifle?

Tim. Who, me? Lord! no 'tis none of I, it is cousin Hartop in my cloaths.

Pen. What's this? And pray who——

Jenk. Why, as I see the affair is concluded, you may, madam, call me Jenkins: Come, Hartop, you may now throw off your disguise; the Knight had like to have embarrassed us.

Pen. How, Mr. Jenkins! and would you, sir, participate of a plot too——

Har. Madam, in the issue, your family will, I hope, have no great reason to repent; I always had the greatest veneration for Miss Penelope Trifle's understanding

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standing; the highest esteem for her virtues, which can intitle me to the honour of being regarded as her relation.

Pen. Sir, I shall determine on nothing, 'till I am apprised of my brother's resolution.

Har. For that we must wait. Sir Gregory, I must intreat you and your son's pardon for some little liberties I have taken with you both. Mr. Jenkins I have the highest obligation to your friendship; and Miss, when we become a little better acquainted, I flatter myself, the change will not prove unpleasing.

Suck. I know nothing at all about it.

Har. Sir Gregory, we shall have your company at dinner.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, no, no, that boy has spoil'd my stomach—— Come, Tim, fetch thy rib, and let us be jogging towards Wales; but how thou wilt get off with thy mother——

Tim. Never fear, father——

*Since you have been pleas'd our nuptial knot to bless,
We shall be happy all our lives——more or less——*

F I N I S.

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